

Murder in the Schoolroom, Part II JUN 16 REC'D 43790

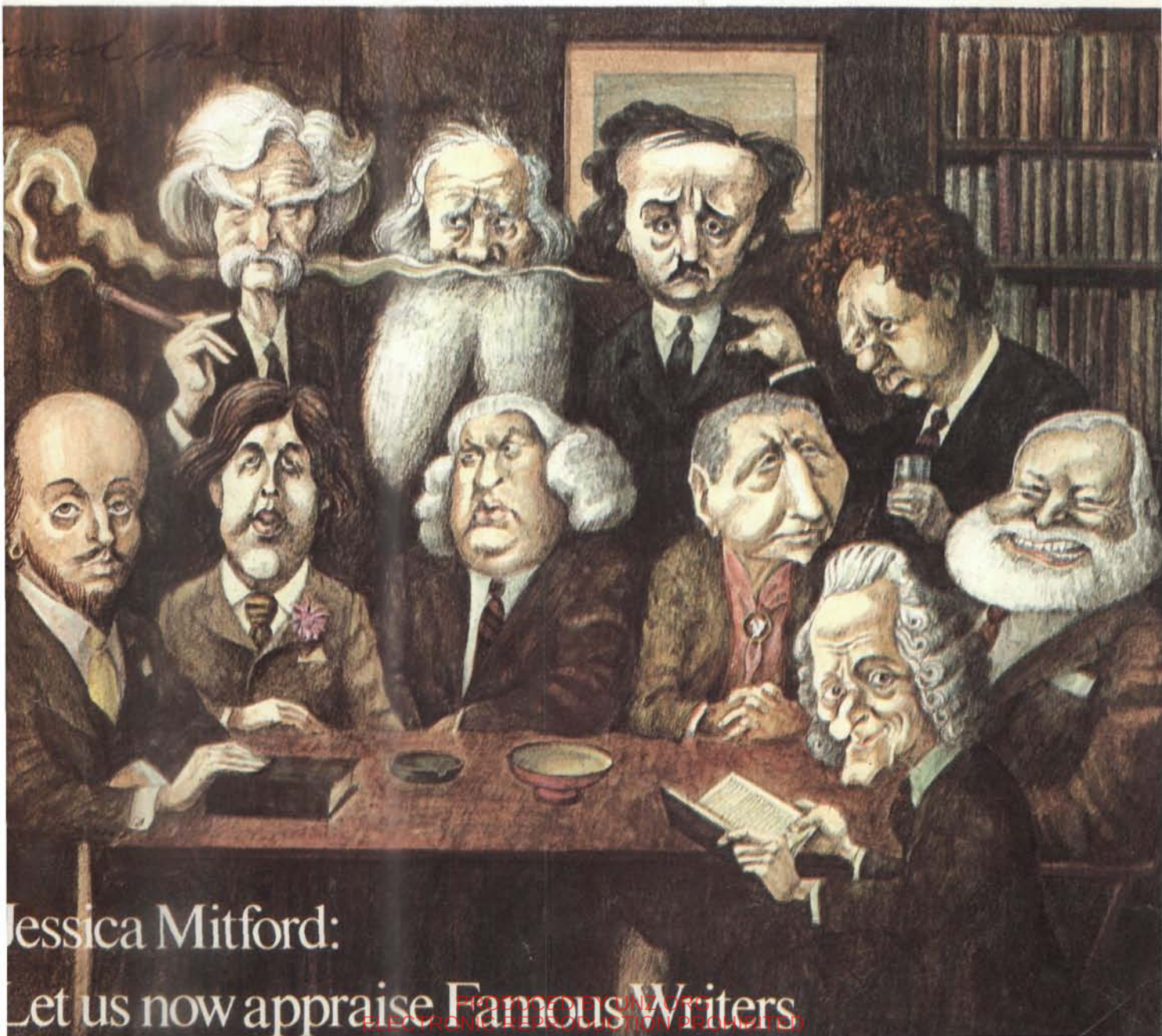
THE

JULY 1970

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Atlantic

"We're looking for people who want to write."



Jessica Mitford:

Let us now appraise Famous Writers

A Mild Sensation is what most people look for and almost never find.

It is a rare Scotch drinker indeed who forms a lifelong kinship with one Scotch. It's not that we're wanderers by nature. But by taste.

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Ambassador...The Mild Sensation.
Mellowed 8 years.





The painting that made a marriage legal

Not a person in a thousand suspects the real meaning of this famous double portrait by Jan van Eyck. Actually, it portrays a wedding, and all the fascinating details are symbolic references to the sacrament of marriage.

As John Canaday points out in the first portfolio of the Metropolitan Museum Seminars in Art, the little dogs symbolize fidelity; the discarded sandals, humility; and the single candle, the presence of God. Above the mirror, which signifies purity, is an inscription meaning, "Jan van Eyck was here, 1434," written in script proper to a document. For this painting really is a document: a painted marriage certificate.

If you had come across this painting in a museum, would you have understood what the artist was trying to tell you? Or would you have missed the hidden meanings?

A surprising number of otherwise cultivated persons have a blind spot so far as painting is concerned. Visiting a museum, they stand before a respected work of art and see nothing but its surface aspects. It was to help such persons that New York's Metropolitan Museum and John Canaday, its critic of *The New York Times*, created the Seminars in Art, a unique program of assisted self-education in art appreciation.

Each seminar comes in the form of a handsome portfolio, the core of which is a lecture devoted to one aspect of painting. Each is illustrated with many black-and-white pictures and contains twelve large separate full-color reproductions of notable paintings. As you compare these masterpieces side by side, Mr. Canaday's lectures clarify their basic differences and similarities, and so reveal what to look for in any painting you may see.

Soon paintings will be more than just "good" or "bad" to you. You will be able to talk knowledgeably and form your own educated opinion when you visit a gallery or museum. And parents will find themselves sharing their understanding with their children, thereby providing a foundation for a lifelong interest in art.

Examine the first portfolio without charge

You can study the first seminar by mailing the coupon on this page to the Book-of-the-Month Club, which administers the program for the Museum. You will receive the first of the twelve portfolios, *What Is a Painting?*, for a two-week trial examination. Subsequent portfolios, sent at the rate of one a month, are devoted to realism, expressionism, abstraction, composition, painting techniques, and the role of the artist as social critic and visionary.

If you choose not to continue, simply return the portfolio and your subscription will be canceled. There is no further obligation. But if you are convinced of the program's worth, you pay only \$3.75, plus a small charge to cover mailing and handling expense, for this and for each of the remaining portfolios you accept.

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Coming in the Atlantic

Birds of America is the new novel by Mary McCarthy. Part of this much anticipated work by the author of *The Group*, *The Man in the Brooks Brothers Shirt*, and other novels and stories will appear in August.

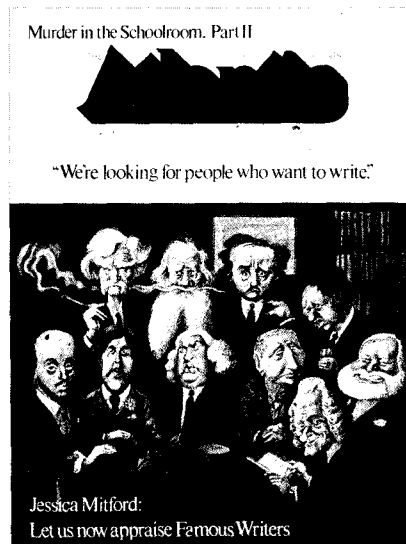
Remember Tokyo Bay—it was 25 years ago that Japan announced its surrender, and a young man who was to become one of America's great journalists made his plans to cover the formal surrender on the deck of the battleship *Missouri*.

Theodore H. White, of *Making of the President* fame, tells in a nostalgic memoir of the making of the surrender in September, 1945.

Novel Bites Man is Dan Wakefield's account of how, like so many would-be novelists, he got pregnant with "the book" long ago and finally—if you'll bear with us biologically—became the father of a spanking first novel.

The Big Ballet Contest in Moscow

by Agnes DeMille
Murder in the Schoolroom, Part III, The High School
 by Charles E. Silberman



Cover: Edward Sorel

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It seems barely possible that the United Nations is twenty-five years old this year, but the calendar—merciless as always—says that it is. For someone who watched the birth of the organization, first the charter negotiations at Dumbarton Oaks, then the conference at San Francisco, the dramatic first meetings at Hunter College in New York, and the settling-in at the war-built factory on Long Island, this is a moment for reflection and nostalgia.

Reflection: Many can recall the great enthusiasm and great expectations with which America welcomed the creation of the UN. Partly out of guilt for our refusal to join the League of Nations, partly out of our certainty that true peace had come, we entrusted to the new organization hopes far greater than it could ever satisfy. It was the dashing of these high hopes that led, soon thereafter, to our mixture of disillusionment and moral outrage when the planet proved to be far more complicated and willful than the One World we had talked about in the groping days of World War II.

Today, save for a vocal minority made up of types to whom the United Nations has always been anathema, we can feel better about the organization because we are somewhat more realistic about what it cannot do. It cannot settle the big disputes between the big powers, or between some of the small ones, either. It can but wring its hands over a tragedy like that now playing in Southeast Asia, or do no more than slacken the pace of the new one growing in the Middle East. But the UN can work as a cartilage between inflamed joints; it can light

a lot of candles; and in the many activities of its affiliated agencies around the world, the UN has built itself into a sort of iceberg of achievement in cooperation among governments and among men.

As for nostalgia: There were moments in those early days when many who worked for it and many who wrote about it wondered if the organization would survive a decade, let alone a quarter century, caught as it was in the grinding mills of the cold war and the rising surge—last gasp?—of old nationalism in passionate new hands. But even in those glum days, there were saving interludes.

Who remembers the day in the Security Council at Lake Success when the late Senator Warren Austin, the generous and kind American representative, grew impatient with the wrangling over Palestine, and cried: "It is time the Arabs and Jews sat down and settled this dispute in the true Christian spirit"? Or the time when the acting chairman of the General Assembly's Political Committee, an old Bolshevik named Dmitri Manuilski, exploded after being repeatedly overruled by the committee majority: "No, no, no!" he shouted, "this Democratic procedure must cease?"

I remember.

Happy Silver Anniversary, UN.



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Reynolds reclamation plan for aluminum cans and other aluminum scrap.

In Los Angeles alone, Reynolds test program got people to redeem over 1,000,000 aluminum cans per month. Now we're working on sixteen more states.

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Reynolds has working proof of this with its anti-litter, aluminum can recycling program. Starting in Miami over three years ago, we've developed approaches that are now about to be put to work in 16 states.

They'll be pulling used aluminum cans and other discarded aluminum products off the scrap



heap and back to our reclamation plants. They'll be helping to clean up our streets and conserve our nation's resources at the same time.

Los Angeles gets involved.

We know these programs work. One plan, with a Reynolds promotion drive behind it, has Los Angeles citizens bringing more than *a million cans a month* into

our plant there. It has not only made Los Angeles people more aware of their litter problem, it has *involved* them, stimulated them into doing something about it.

Now we're expanding our Miami effort to cover all of Florida. We'll be launching our campaign in New York City, and will move into northern New Jersey, Houston, San Francisco, and the Pacific Northwest.

In addition, we are working with Adolph Coors Brewing Company of Colorado to help reclaim their used aluminum beer cans. We'll be taking their cans from Arizona, Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, and California.

Used aluminum is valuable.

What makes the program work is the basic value of aluminum itself. Scrap aluminum is worth \$200 a ton, because it can be melted down and reused so readily. Scrap steel, by comparison, brings only \$20 a ton; paper, \$16 a ton.

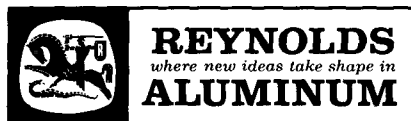
So used aluminum cans are worth picking up, worth saving and taking to a reclamation plant. Reynolds is able to offer $\frac{1}{2}\epsilon$ per can, and to suggest that Boy Scouts, hospital charity groups, and other organizations—and individuals—raise funds by collecting and returning aluminum scrap.

They're taking our suggestions. One million cans that don't show

up in Los Angeles garbage heaps every month prove that.

Letters for anti-litter.

Our anti-litter efforts have brought us much applause from Boy Scout officials, Congressmen, Keep America Clean groups, civic leaders, and many others. But our chief satisfaction is in being able to help with this most difficult and important problem. We intend to keep at it, and to work even harder. Reynolds Metals Company, P.O. Box 2346-LP, Richmond, Virginia, 23218.



Individuals and organizations bring all-aluminum cans to the Reynolds reclamation center.



Used cans pass through a magnetic separator and are then shredded.



After shipment to reclamation plants, the shredded aluminum is melted and cast into secondary ingots.



Ingots then move into other Reynolds plants to be formed into sheet, plate or other mill products.



The recycled aluminum re-enters the economy in a variety of attractive, durable new products.

REPORTS:

WASHINGTON

The Peace Corps was in deep trouble even before President Nixon sent the troops into Cambodia, and its problems have been symptomatic of much else that has been happening in the country. Founded in the heady early days of the Kennedy Administration—almost a decade ago—the Peace Corps was to represent the best that was in us. Idealistic volunteers, drawn mainly from our young, would be sent throughout the developing world, taking our superior techniques, and showing the goodness of the American people.

And after they went out, the stories came back about the city boy who saved a rice crop in Pakistan; the Southern belle who became a midwife in Sierra Leone; the girl who organized a mental hospital in Pakistan; the young man who started a successful handicraft industry in Colombia. There was a girl who became English teacher, track coach, and school bus driver in Ghana, and who really did live in a hut. The volunteers were inventive, tough, and risk-takers. At the Washington headquarters, a talented group of staff members worked hard, fought hard, thought it a disgrace to take a vacation or not to work until midnight at least once a week, and were passionately devoted to the Peace Corps. They were the kind of people who went on to other things in public life: Bill Moyers, Richard Ottinger, Frank Mankiewicz, Harris Wofford, and John D. Rockefeller IV.

The idea, and it was always more important as an idea than as a program, began to go sour in the mid-sixties. The largest but not sole cause was the Vietnam War. Not only had peace been replaced by war, but

Kennedy had been replaced by Johnson. Sargent Shriver, the Peace Corps' first director, had been replaced by a competent but less inspiring leader. As the agency aged, spontaneity was replaced by bureaucracy. America discovered its own problems of poverty and race, and many who might have served in the Peace Corps concluded that there was more important work to be done at home. Recently, the Nixon Administration has attempted to turn the Peace Corps into a more businesslike, middle-American, dissent-free, technical assistance program. In so doing, it is transforming the idea of the Peace Corps, and tearing the institution apart.

Applications for service in the Peace Corps have declined by nearly half. The number of volunteers serving overseas has dropped from about 13,000 in the mid-sixties to about 8400. Of those who go abroad now nearly 40 percent return home for various reasons before the end of their two-year tours. Some countries have asked the Peace Corps to leave. Congress, which has always been tolerant, if not understanding, of the Peace Corps, has begun to cut its funds. And many, including former volunteers and staff members, think the Peace Corps should be abolished. Since the decline of the Peace Corps is a metaphor for so much else, it is worth exploring how it happened.

The good old days

There were a number of motivating forces behind the original Peace Corps idea. Several people, then Senator Hubert Humphrey in particular, were pushing the idea before presidential candidate John F. Kennedy took it up. Some Peace Corps founders feel that the most important force behind it may have been the book

The Ugly American, a best seller in the late fifties. The book portrayed American government representatives abroad, especially those who worked in aid programs, as a national embarrassment. They could not speak the language; they lived ostentatiously and kept to themselves; they made no effort to understand the people of the countries where they served. The Peace Corps evoked a theme Americans wanted to believe: that we were more likable than that. It fit nicely, if not explicitly, into the fifties' and early sixties' cold-war struggle "for the hearts and minds of men." The idea came along, moreover, after the doldrums of the Eisenhower years, when a whole generation of college students had nothing, or thought they had nothing, to do.

It was considered far more important in the beginning to launch the Peace Corps in a big, bold way than to figure out what it was. Shriver traveled around the world selling the idea to sometimes dubious countries. There were efforts to meet specific needs for manpower, as defined by the recipient countries, but these efforts often gave way to the drive for an instant program, and to practicalities. The volunteers who were recruited were largely those most readily available—unskilled, recent college graduates. These were, moreover, the ones most likely to cope with the requirement that Peace Corps workers live in the same conditions as their foreign counterparts. Attempts to recruit skilled and older volunteers ran into nearly insuperable problems of mortgages, seniority ladders, and disinterest. There were sometimes too many volunteers in a country, without enough to do. In some cases they supplanted, rather than supplemented, local professionals. Many

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The situation is bad, and it's getting worse. But it can be turned around, if you're willing to help in a few simple ways. As a beginning, each state needs the tough, effective drunk driving laws

recommended by the National Highway Safety Bureau. (24 states now have these laws.) The next step is fair, impartial enforcement of the laws.

Help stop the traffic slaughter.

For a free copy of the new booklet "The Drunk Driver May Kill You (What You Can Do To Help Get Him Off The Road)," write to the Safety Director, Allstate Insurance Company, Northbrook, Illinois 60062.



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She Needs You...

She needs you to love her. Little Lin Tai has just been abandoned at our Pine Hill Babies Home in Hong Kong. Police doubt her parents or relatives will ever be found. So we must find an American sponsor for her.

How can you sponsor a child like Lin Tai? Your questions answered:

Q. What does it cost to sponsor a child?
A. Only \$12 per month. (Your gifts are tax deductible.)

Q. May I choose the child I wish to help?
A. You may indicate your preference of boy or girl, age, and country. Many sponsors allow us to select a child from our emergency list.

Q. Will I receive a photograph of my child?
A. Yes, and with the photograph will come a case history plus a description of the Home or project where your child receives help.

Q. How long does it take before I learn about the child assigned to me? A. You will receive your personal sponsor folder in

about two weeks, giving you complete information about the child you will be helping.

Q. May I write to my child? A. Yes. In fact, your child will write to you a few weeks after you become a sponsor. Your letters are translated by one of our workers overseas. You receive your child's original letter, plus an English translation, direct from the home or project overseas.

Q. How long has CCF been helping children?
A. Since 1938.

Q. What help does the child receive from my support? A. In countries of great poverty, such as India, your gifts provide total support for a child. In other countries your sponsorship gives the children benefits that otherwise they would not receive, such as diet supplements, medical care, adequate clothing, school supplies.

Q. Are all the children in orphanages?
A. No, some live with widowed mothers, and through CCF Family Helper Projects they are enabled to stay at home, rather than enter an orphanage.

Q. What type of projects does CCF support overseas? A. Besides the orphanages and Family Helper Projects CCF has homes for the blind, abandoned babies homes, day care nurseries, health homes, vocational training centers, and many other types of projects.

Q. Who owns and operates CCF? A. Christian Children's Fund is an independent, non-profit organization, regulated by a national Board of Directors. CCF cooperates with both church and government agencies, but is completely independent.

Q. Who supervises the work overseas? A. Regional offices are staffed with both Americans and nationals. Caseworkers, orphanage superintendents, housemothers, and other personnel must meet high professional standards—plus have a deep love for children.

Q. How do you keep track of all the children and sponsors? A. Through our IBM data processing equipment, we maintain complete information on every child receiving assistance and the sponsor who provides the gifts.

Children on our emergency list this month live in India, Brazil, Taiwan (Formosa) and Hong Kong.

WASHINGTON

taught English "as a second language," often in areas where there was barely literacy in the first.

Despite the talk about the necessity for relevance to economic development, that goal was not taken very seriously. "The most successful thing about the Peace Corps," says Warren Wiggins, one of Shriver's associates in starting it, "is that in sixty countries people saw Americans and liked them. Secondly, what happened to those 30,000 volunteers in terms of their own lives is tremendously important. You would be hard-pressed to find any comparable group that will measure up to that 30,000 in terms of that experience and what it did to them."

It did not always turn out so well. Several volunteers returned disappointed or embittered—by the hopelessness of the conditions they found, and in some cases because of what they saw of American foreign policy and interests at work. Paul Cowan, in his recent book, *The Making of an Un-American*, writes:

In many cases the Peace Corps ... with its close ties to conservatives in the State Department, its insensitivity to the local culture and the careless planning that insensitivity produced, subverted the idealism that some of the volunteers had brought to training and transformed the vague xenophobic instincts ... into active prejudices against host-country nationals.

A small group which formed a Committee of Returned Volunteers concluded that the Peace Corps was an "agent of imperialism." The Committee "liberated" the Peace Corps' Washington offices during the May demonstrations against the sending of American troops into Cambodia. Its leaflets said, "We found that U. S. projects in these countries are designed to achieve political control and economic exploitation; to build an Empire for the United States. As volunteers we were part of that strategy; we were the Marines in velvet gloves." However, it is not just radicals who have been thinking that it might be time to end the Peace Corps. Countries which have asked the Peace Corps to leave now include Cyprus, Ceylon, Indonesia, Guinea, Pakistan, Mauritania, Gabon, Tanzania, Libya, and

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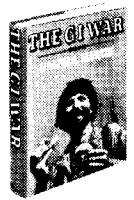
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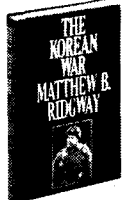
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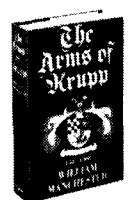
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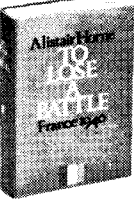
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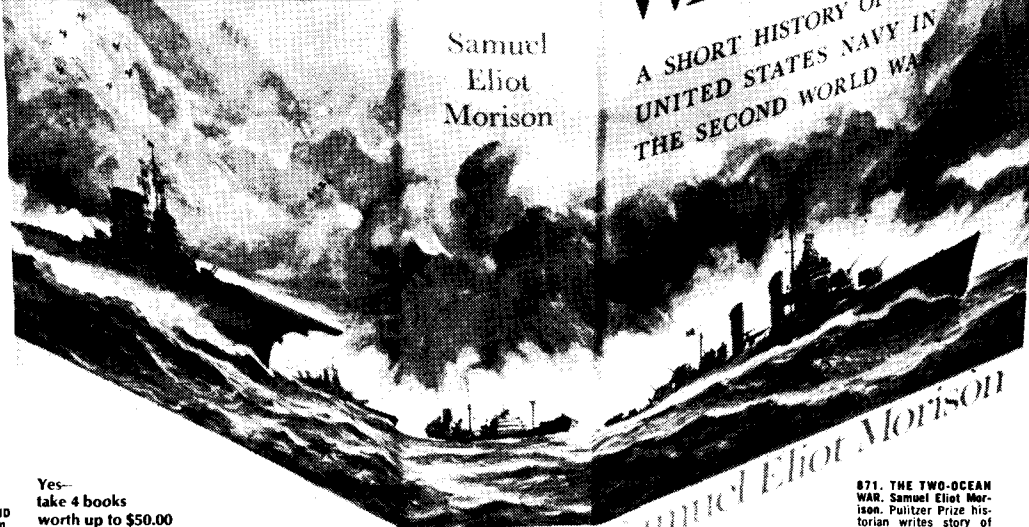
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WASHINGTON

the Somali Republic. Ceylon and Guinea did invite it back. Nationalism was rising, and America wasn't proving to be all that lovable after all. The Peace Corps was overly visible, a bit too reminiscent of the colonial and missionary white-man's-burden tradition, and an obvious political target. In some countries where the Peace Corps has remained, political tensions have made life more difficult for the volunteers.

The war led to serious disputes over the volunteers' freedom to express their dissent. They are not, strictly speaking, government employees, but they are sent abroad and paid by the government. There was a major upheaval within the Peace Corps when in 1967 a volunteer was dismissed for writing an antiwar letter which appeared in a Chilean newspaper; upon his return to the United States, his draft board reclassified him. Last year a court ruled that he had been wrongfully dismissed and illegally reclassified. The Democratic Administration developed a policy, continued by the Republi-

cans, that volunteers could speak out, and sign statements, as long as their actions did not involve the politics of the country in which they were serving. But this line, it turned out, was not so easily drawn.

Hanging up the hair shirt

The Nixon Administration has put its own imprint on the Peace Corps. The changes range from matters of purpose and values to the small matters of style which have meant so much to the Peace Corps' determinedly hair-shirt image. It was widely noted when a senior staff member and his wife inspected a project in Barbados during the winter season; when one of the new leaders showed up in Africa wearing a safari helmet.

The emphasis is on making the agency more businesslike, and on hiring businessmen, whether or not there is anything in their experience to give them a feel for what the Peace Corps has been about. A consulting agency was brought in to suggest reorganization. Yet new staff members have come and gone with unusual frequency. There has yet to

be assembled a complete or competent new group of administrators.

The Peace Corps, like so much of the Washington bureaucracy, is heavily populated by liberal Democrats who have a hard time accepting the facts that there is a two-party system, and that the other fellows won. And that having won, they have a prerogative to try to impose their own policies. These tensions are troublesome within the Peace Corps as elsewhere. But a great deal more than bureaucratic drag and partisanship has been plaguing the Peace Corps. And the issues are affecting not just the bureaucrats, but also the volunteers, present and potential.

Joseph Blatchford, the thirty-five-year-old new director, decided that the Peace Corps needed a new definition. "I found a lot of debate at senior staff level, and the debate flared up often," he said. "At one meeting there was a lot of heated yelling and screaming about what the Peace Corps is. I broke the meeting up and I said, 'Hold it, fellows, I think we ought to come up with a new definition.' People here had put great value on the Peace Corps as an outlet for the young person, so the recruitment was on campus, in the liberal arts schools. We seem to have hammered out a definition which calmed everybody down: its first priority was to serve the needs of the countries as expressed by those countries. The program had to rise or fall or justify itself on what contribution it made to the country, in its terms. You can't justify sending people overseas for itself."

Blatchford later announced the Peace Corps' "New Directions." There would be great efforts to attract blue-collar workers, experienced teachers, businessmen, and farmers. Families would be recruited. There would be new emphasis on recruiting minorities; the Peace Corps has been a white middle-class organization. All of this has been tried before, and Blatchford's efforts have been running into some of the old problems. He and his aides put out figures to document their success, but there is more than a little puffery involved. They say, for example, that *applications* by people over thirty have increased by "110 percent" over last year; this means that last year 6 percent of the applicants were over thirty, and this year 13 percent were. They say that applications by blue-

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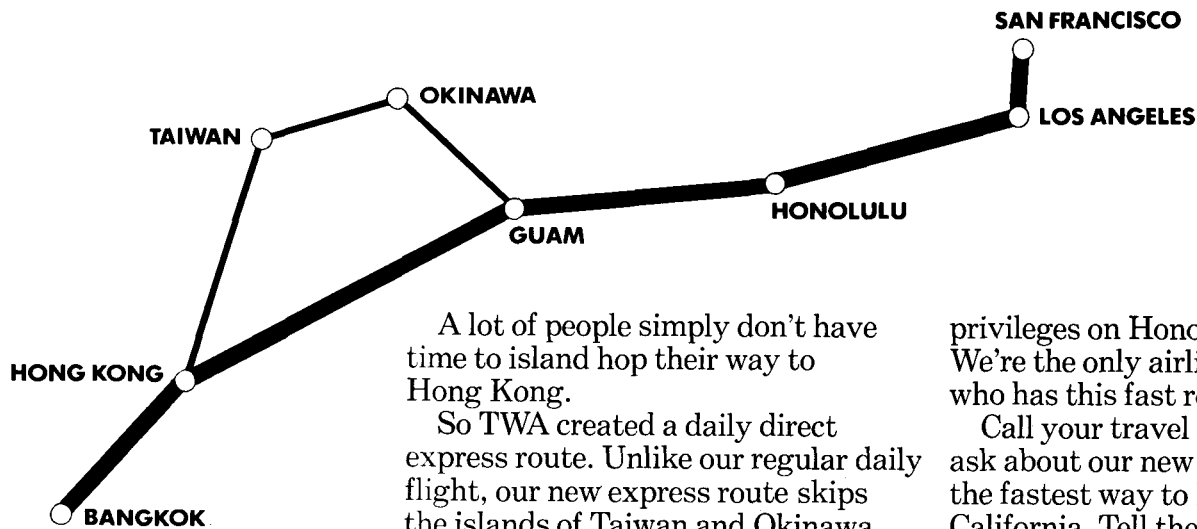
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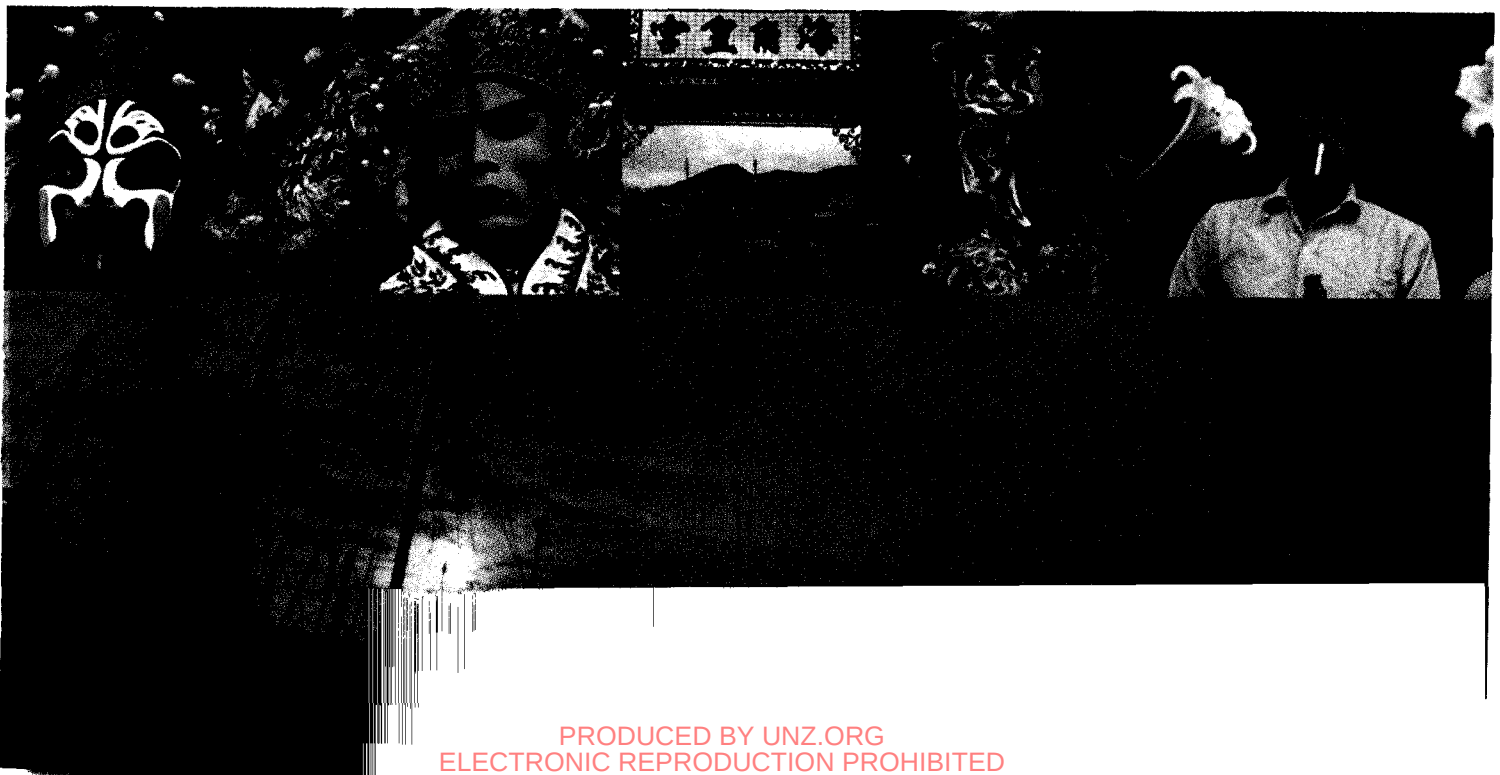
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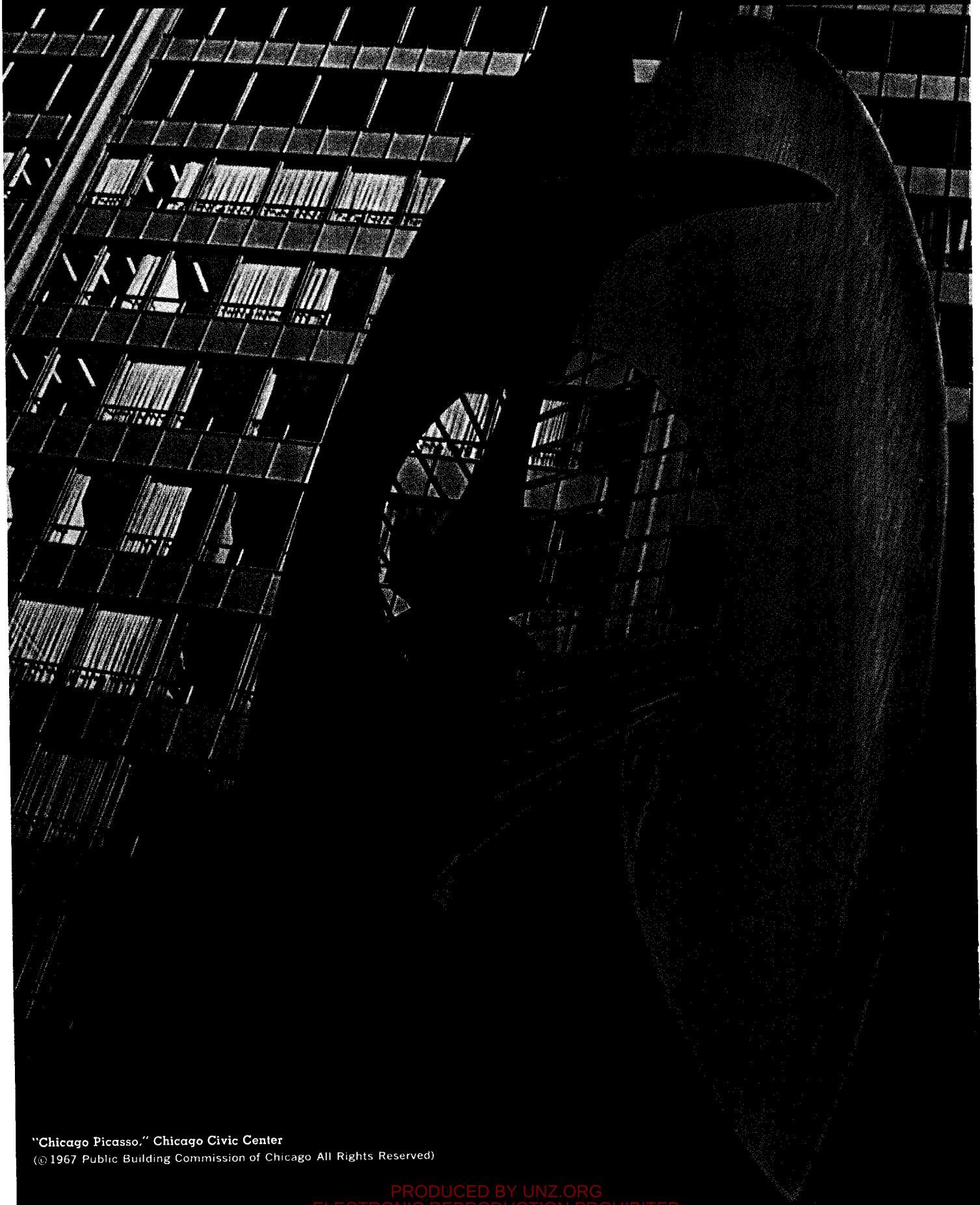
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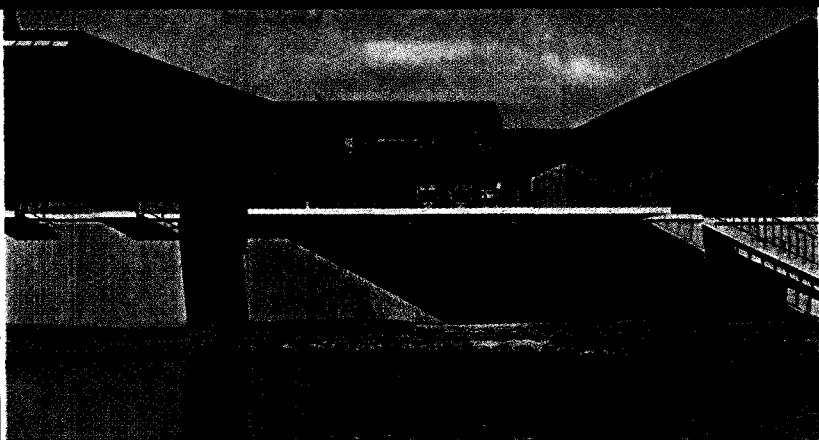
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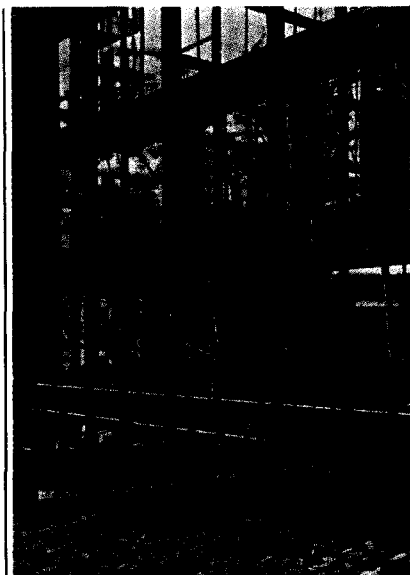


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Twenty-five years ago we didn't hear much about the adverse effects of drugs, but we didn't have many effective ones at that time. With the advent of more potent and useful products, undesirable side effects sometimes become a problem. This will be true in the future, too. New cancer agents, antibiotics and drugs for hypertension, for example, will probably be even more potent. Many anti-cancer agents owe their activity to their effect on cells. Which means a balance must be drawn between the good work done by a drug and its unwanted effects.

Physicians often can affect this balance by adjusting the dosage, or by selecting a different form of an existing drug product potent enough to do the job. But that doesn't stop us from looking for improvements. Perhaps what we are learning about modifying molecular structures will help us to control side effects. We've already had some success. We expect to have more.

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Another point of view . . .

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WASHINGTON

collar workers are up by 50 percent, meaning 464 over 304. Blatchford talks about sending 200 families overseas this year, and says that there is "tremendous enthusiasm" for that program; thus far only ten families have enlisted.

Should the "New Directions" happen to work, there would be a different sort of Peace Corps. Families would need to be near schools, and that would have to be in the major cities, close to the rest of the American community. It has already been found that older volunteers are less adept at learning the foreign language or adjusting to the living conditions. The emphasis on measurable results turns it into a development program requiring certain performance on the part of both donor and recipient. The new direction, in other words, is back to foreign aid.

The real collision, however, has come not so much over the articulation of new policies as over the Peace Corps' relation to politics. With a Kennedy brother-in-law running it, the identity of the Peace Corps was naturally linked to the Kennedy Administration. Nevertheless, it was an essential part of the Peace Corps concept that it be non-partisan, independent, and non-responsive to government pressures. Staff and volunteers in the early years did feel that its independence was being protected. But insulation over the years may have been an unrealistic aim, and an impossibility when a war is dividing a nation. The advent of the Republican Administration, less tolerant of dissent than its predecessor, and clumsy in its attempts to bend the government to its politics, nearly finished off the Peace Corps.

Blatchford's own style and political background complicated the problem. He ran for Congress in 1968, and is suspected of further political ambitions. "There is a question here," said one staff member who is sympathetic to Blatchford, "as to where his real interests are. If his political interests collide with getting this agency's job done, where will he be? There weren't these questions about his predecessors. Now his politics, the politics of the Nixon Administration, and this agency have to



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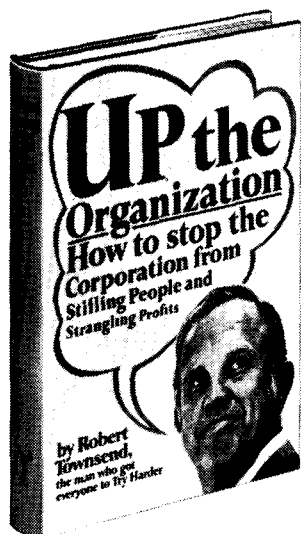
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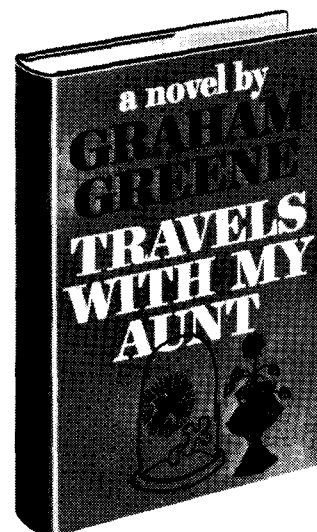


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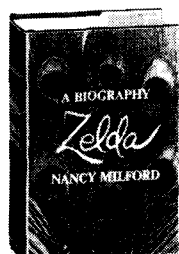
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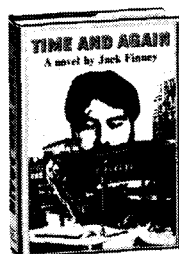


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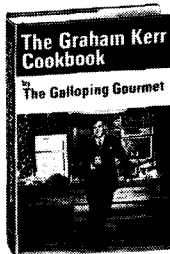
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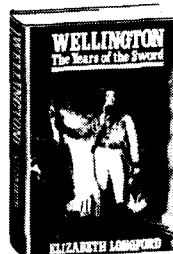
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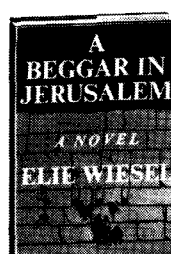
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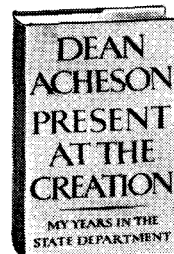
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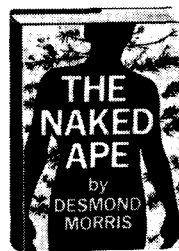
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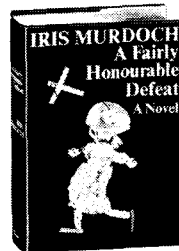
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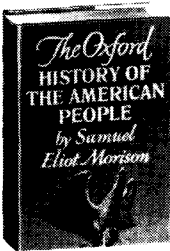
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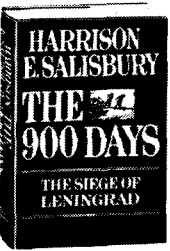
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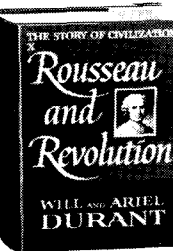
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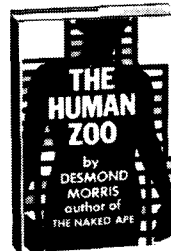
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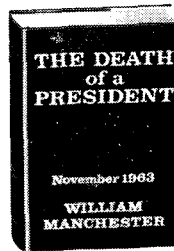
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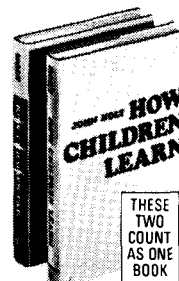
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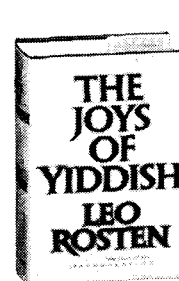
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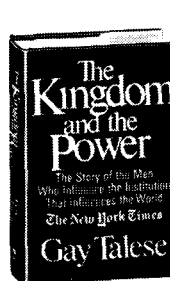
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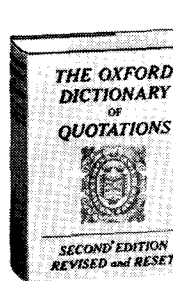
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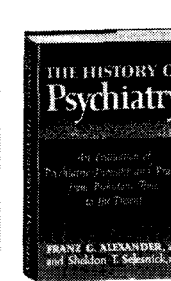
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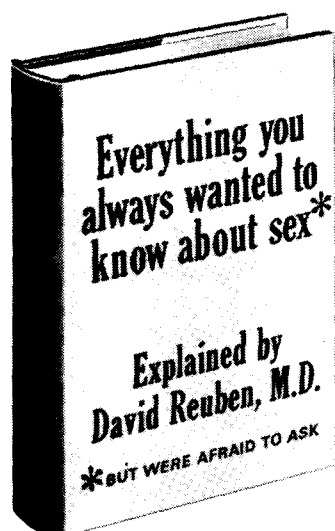


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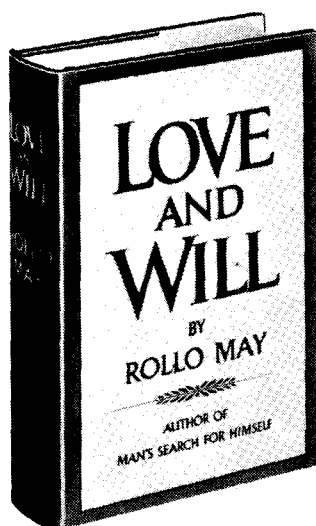


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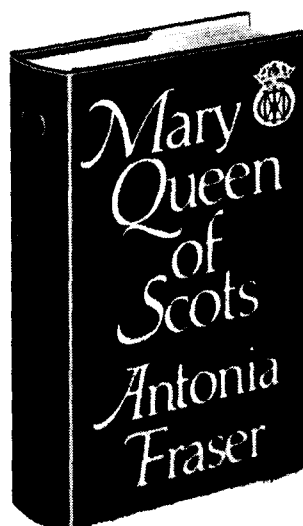
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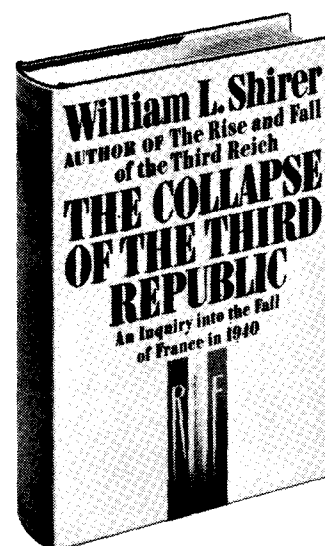
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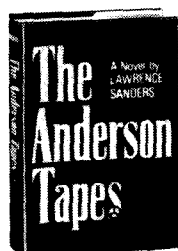


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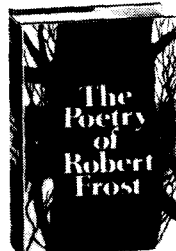


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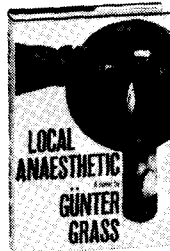
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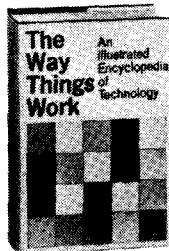
191. THE ANDERSON TAPES by LAWRENCE SANDERS (Retail price \$5.95)



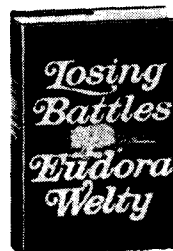
127. THE POETRY OF ROBERT FROST Edited by EDWARD CONNERY LATHEM (Retail price \$10.95)



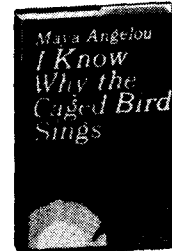
406. LOCAL ANAESTHETIC by GÜNTER GRASS (Retail price \$6.95)



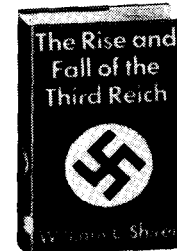
107. THE WAY THINGS WORK: An Illustrated Encyclopedia of Technology (Retail price \$9.95)



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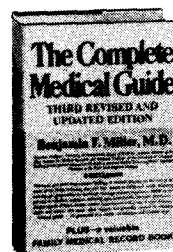
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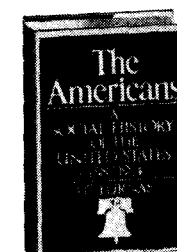
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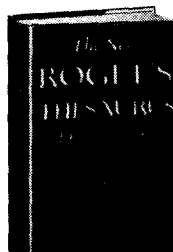
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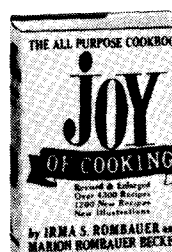
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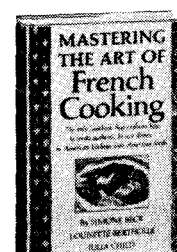
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WASHINGTON

collide." Blatchford addressed a Republican dinner with a strong partisan speech, which was then distributed throughout the Peace Corps. He explained to an angry Senator J. William Fulbright that this had occurred through a "clerical error."

He first became interested in voluntarism, his eight-page biographical statement begins, "when then-Vice President Nixon was threatened by a mob in Caracas." Following Mr. Nixon's crisis in Latin America, Blatchford organized his own Latin American goodwill tour of tennis players and jazz musicians. He was disturbed by what he saw, and returned to the United States to form a voluntary organization called ACCION. "This was," his biography points out, "a full eighteen months before President John F. Kennedy established the Peace Corps." The program was funded by large American corporations doing business in Latin America, and Latin American businessmen. Blatchford is now considering ways to form joint Peace Corps-business programs overseas, an idea many staff members find heedless of local sensibilities, and anathema to the Peace Corps concept.

Looking for white bucks

The new Peace Corps director's most difficult problem has been to try to negotiate the wide, perhaps impassable, distance between the Nixon White House and the Peace Corps constituency. The essential Peace Corps constituent of 1970—a young university graduate born around 1950—feels the war is intolerable, and government is not to be trusted. Richard Nixon has spent his adult life seeking government power; when he spoke to students about the war during the mid-May demonstrations, he talked about Neville Chamberlain. The Administration's recent frantic efforts to "reopen communications" with the young, however, have probably come too late. Blatchford has had to answer to the White House when volunteers have spoken out or written letters against the war. There was a major crisis when volunteers in Afghanistan were reported to be planning to meet Vice President Agnew with protest signs. The anti-Agnew demonstration never

took place, but Agnew has never forgiven the Peace Corps nonetheless. At least two hundred Peace Corps personnel took part in last year's Moratorium activities. "The image is held in some quarters," says Blatchford, "that it is a giant agency of hippies and draft dodgers."

Peace Corps officials have tried to discourage dissent without angering the volunteers, but their efforts have not always worked. Official panic over dissent has usually been self-fulfilling, intensifying the volunteers' determination to speak out and drawing attention to the issue. Peace Corps officials intimate that some volunteers have been fired for protest activities, when in fact they have not. "The problem about the 'firing,'" explained a staff member, "is that it hasn't happened, but Blatchford has to make certain people think it has, in order to keep the organization going. He is walking a tightrope between the Administration and the group here." "Dissent is a very difficult issue," says Blatchford. "So many volunteers don't understand this. They don't realize the unbelievable reaction this would have at home."

Another way, of course, of trying to retain official forbearance of the Peace Corps in a period of dissent is to try to fill it with the kinds of people who won't dissent. Thus it is not just for their skills that blue-collar workers and older volunteers are so sought after now. There has also been a beating of the bushes for the sort of recent college graduate who might be less troublesome, who fits perhaps some officials' view of what a college graduate ought to be. "You can't go back to the straight, white-bucks, fraternity president kind of guy," said a staff man friendly to Blatchford. "He doesn't exist anymore, but they don't know that yet. They talk here about how there are technical students who are where the generalists were in the early sixties, but they aren't. The revolution has hit everyone. You can't turn off the bachelor of arts and turn on the engineers. The value systems are more unified than that—against the war and against government."

In the family

In mid-April, Blatchford's office prepared a memorandum for members of the House Foreign Affairs

Committee on "Specific Steps Taken to Deal With Protests and to Recruit New Types of Volunteers." "We inherited a very difficult situation resulting from volunteers just out of college with strong liberal views," it said. "We have also had to weed out many members of a hostile staff hired during the past eight years of Democratic administration. . . . There was no personal screening of volunteers prior to training. There was no adequate staff training. Some members of the press were anxious to embarrass the Administration by exploiting a few volunteers' protests against U. S. foreign policy. In spite of this, the Peace Corps offers the Administration great potential if the correct steps are taken. I believe we are well on the way toward eliminating public protests and changing the type of volunteers who go overseas. . . . In little more than a year from now, all volunteers overseas will have been selected during this Administration." The memorandum talked about the new types of volunteers: "They are skilled tradesmen, very idealistic, and support the Administration's policies. Some have sons in Vietnam."

The memorandum led to a confrontation meeting between Blatchford and nearly two hundred members of the staff. It took place during the turbulent week after the President announced the sending of troops into Cambodia. The staff expressed its concerns about what was happening to the Peace Corps, and proposed the presentation of a petition to the President. "The Director of the Peace Corps," it said, "has been subjected to unfair and excessive political pressures to conform to partisan policies. . . . Mr. President, let it be known in these times of polarization and tension that the Peace Corps has kept its integrity, that it remains an officially sanctioned organization in which any American desiring to effect change peacefully and constructively has an opportunity to serve." Blatchford asked that the petition not be sent, that the dispute be kept "in the family." He also said, according to a number of people who attended the meeting, that he was under more pressure than they could know, and that he did not know whether the Peace Corps could survive the Nixon Administration.

Blatchford says that he saw the



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confrontation as another of the "emotional crises of the Peace Corps. . . . We are trying to bring more businesslike methods to the Peace Corps and work more closely with the White House and other agencies. I think it has to keep going. But this makes people nervous. It is going through a crisis of growing up, and people don't know if they can adjust to blue-collar workers and more Republicans, and going on with a Nixon Administration and a war. There had been neglect of the fact that the Peace Corps is part of the political system. I argued in 1961 that it should not be part of the political system, not part of the government with the White House, the Congress, and the State Department."

He was probably right. It is perhaps impossible to create a government institution that can remain immune to government. Many of the strongest proponents of continuing the Peace Corps are those who began it, but they want to perpetuate something that no longer exists. They may be in somewhat the same position as others who have been in on the launching of bold new gov-

ernment experiments and who continue to defend them when the rationale has faded. It is just that the time span for the Peace Corps has been relatively brief, and the change in its nature and role relatively precipitous. Moreover, it is harder to let it go because the idealism from which it sprang is something we all want to remember.

—ELIZABETH B. DREW

EUROPE

The last great political ordering of Europe from the Atlantic to the Urals took place in this wonderful city of baroque and Beethoven one hundred and fifty-five years ago, and Vienna has lived on the memory of its famous Congress ever since.

Castlereagh, Metternich, Talleyrand, and Czar Alexander I—the British, Austrian, French, and Russian "big four" of the day—did their work well. They assembled in Vienna in October of 1814, assisted and inhibited by a myriad of other delegates and hangers-on from all over Europe, including thirty-six minor German princes with wives and mis-

tresses. After a brief, tense, but in the end salutary overshadowing of their labors by Napoleon's escape from Elba and the Battle of Waterloo, the final act of the Congress was signed on June 9, 1815. The drama of the Hundred Days and the Duke of Wellington's narrow victory had given renewed impetus and meaning to the primary objective of the Congress—the liquidation of fifteen years of Napoleonic conquest and domination of Europe and the organization of a pan-European settlement which would provide a stable and lasting peace. For all their imperfections, the compromises and patchwork of the Congress served that purpose.

The Congress fixed boundaries and worked out territorial settlements involving more than twenty-five European states and empires. It created democratic Switzerland in the middle of Europe and guaranteed its neutrality for all time. It laid the framework for the German confederation and resolved minor dynastic disputes among feuding and competing Bourbons and Bonapartes, Hohenzollerns, Hanoverians, Hapsburgs, and other light-opera royalty.

The first multilateral effort to curb

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the American have made look place at the Congress of Vienna. The plight of Europe's Jews was debated there. The Congress adopted important principles of freedom of navigation on Europe's rivers and inland waterways, and endorsed maritime rights on the high seas. Colonies around the world were parceled out among the victorious powers. And finally the Congress drew up a code of diplomatic practice and precedent which remained standard until its revision by a United Nations commission in Vienna in the 1960s.

Although these political and territorial arrangements which were laid down in 1815 underwent mutations and eruptions, broadly speaking, peace was maintained; meanwhile the Industrial Revolution raised Europe's standards and influence to a level that was the envy of the globe.

If the pieces fit

Against the fading backdrop of this achievement, the strategic arms limitation talks (SALT) which have been taking place in Vienna seem at a glance a rather pale, drab affair. American and Russian diplomats at-

tired in sober business suits, furtively slipping in and out of each other's embassies twice weekly to discuss in deepest secrecy such esoteric horrors as megaton overkill and multiple re-entry intercontinental ballistic launch vehicles, are no match for the plumage and glitter, let alone the sense of history in the making, which was the Congress of Vienna.

All the same, it does now seem to be barely possible that the SALT negotiations—important and vital as they are of themselves—may really turn out to be part of a much wider diplomatic and political process and movement which is under way, a groping toward some broad new twentieth-century pan-European understanding. Europe today is like a vast polar ice cap which is beginning to grind and growl and shift as huge icebergs break off in the warmer currents of spring. In every capital, East and West, a sense of historic change twenty-five years after the end of World War II now dominates all other foreign-policy considerations. Naturally this has some diplomats worried and others excited, depending on whether they see risk or opportunity. It is still too early to say

whether this will carry Europe to some latter-day equivalent of the Congress of Vienna. But it does seem to be true that such an objective and goal is there for diplomacy to strive toward if all of the pieces can be fitted together.

In this context, the overriding American interest in the SALT talks is to find even the most minimal nuclear understanding with the Soviet Union. But the talks also have to be seen as constituting an essential preliminary before the problems of pan-European security and understanding can be resolved. To put it another way round, it seems unlikely that the NATO powers in Europe could or would find any security and understanding in agreement with the Warsaw Pact powers if the nuclear arms race between the leaders of the two blocs went on spiraling upward.

Although some success for SALT is as essential to Europe's future as it is to Soviet-American relations, Europeans are not simply sitting and waiting dutifully to see what eventually will emerge. Willy Brandt is talking with the Russians in Moscow, the Poles in Warsaw, and the East Germans in Erfurt and Kassel. The

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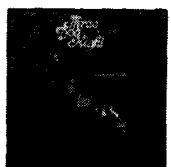
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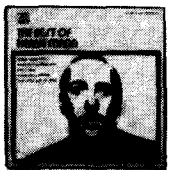
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Atlan LP, 8TR



31799 THREE DOG NIGHT—it Ain't Easy
Dunh LP



44309 BEST OF NINA SIMONE
Phil LP



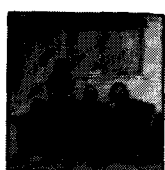
42718 BEST OF HERBIE MANN
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



33067 COUNTRY JOE & FISH—
Here We Are Again
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



17064 MOZART: Sym
Nos. 25, 29, 32—
Lon. Sym, Davis
Phil LP



42665 CROSBY, STILLS & NASH
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS,



33032 IAN & SYLVIA
—Nashville
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



42715 BEST OF MJQ
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



17074 VIENNA CHOIR BOYS—Sing Mozart
Phil LP



31942 GABOR SZABO
—Sorcerer
Impul LP, 8TR, CASS



17049 SIBELIUS
—Sym #2 Concert-
gebouw/Szell
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



33029 BUFFY SAINTE-MARIE
—Gonna Be A
Country Girl Again
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



33077 JOAN BAEZ—
One Day At A Time
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



17317 CASALS—
Plays Beethoven
Phil LP



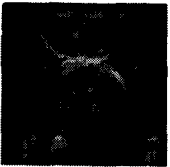
17263 GREGORIAN
CHANT
Phil LP



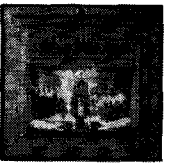
34506 ZORBA THE GREEK—Soundtrack
TwCen LP, 8TR, CASS



44369 MYSTIC MOODS
ORCH. Stormy Weekend
Merc LP, 8TR, CASS



33443 IRON BUTTERFLY—In A
Gadda-Da-Vida
Atco LP, 8TR, CASS



17273 HANDEL
—Water Music
Concertgebouw/
Van Beinum
Phil LP



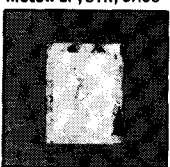
42673 LED ZEPPELIN II
Atlan LP, 8TR



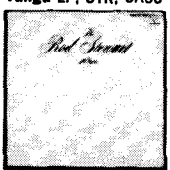
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TwCen LP, 8TR, CASS



30556 D. ROSS & SUPREMES—Love Child
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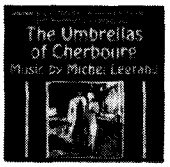
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David's Album
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



43837 ROD STEWART
ALBUM
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS



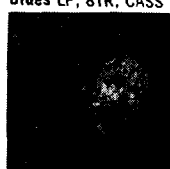
17742 FRENCH
OPERA ARIAS—
Beverly Sills
Westm LP



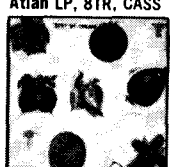
44244 UMBRELLAS
OF CHERBOURG
—Soundtrack
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



49706 B.B. KING—
Completely Well
Blues LP, 8TR, CASS



45638 HERBIE MANN
Underground Memphis
Atlan LP, 8TR, CASS



33486 CREAM—Best
of Cream
Atco LP, 8TR



17274 BACH—Ten
Chorale Preludes/
Dupre Phil LP



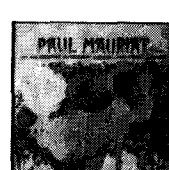
43840 JERRY BUTLER
—You And Me
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS



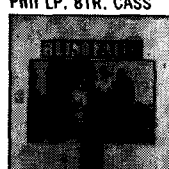
67500 STEPPENWOLF
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Dunhi LP



30555 D. ROSS & SUPREMES
—Join Temptations
Motow LP, 8TR



44368 PAUL MAURIAT
—Midnight Cowboy
Phil LP, 8TR, CASS



33495 BLIND FAITH
Atco LP, 8TR, CASS



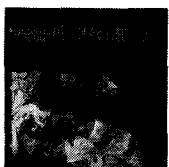
12265 ITALIAN
BAROQUE MASTERS
Baroq LP



33081 OTIS SPANN
—Cryin' Time
Vangu LP, 8TR, CASS



48782 APPLAUSE
—Original Cast
ABC LP



43793 SPANKY AND
OUR GANG—Greatest
Hits
Mercu LP, 8TR, CASS



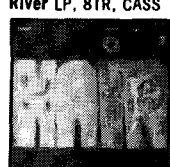
33069 PETER SCHICKELE
—Good Time Ticket
Vangu LP



30602 JACKSON FIVE
—I Want You Back
Motow LP, 8TR, CASS



33252 WES
MONTGOMERY—Best
River LP, 8TR, CASS



44373 HAIR: French
Original Cast
Phil LP



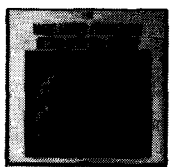
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EUROPE

three Western allies are discussing Berlin problems in Berlin with the Russians for the first time since 1959. Bilateral political exchanges between NATO governments and the Warsaw Pact powers have become so numerous and routine that nobody even keeps a log of the contacts any longer. On the trade front, West Germany, Austria, Italy, and France will be heating homes and running industry by the middle of this decade on Russian natural gas piped, through pipe made in West Germany, all the way from Siberia to the Bavarian border of Czechoslovakia.

The diplomatic and political opportunity which all of this offers on both sides of the rusting Iron Curtain lies in trying to fit it all into a common framework. The proposal for a Conference on European Security offers at least this possibility, except for the fact that on the Communist side there has so far been a discouraging readiness to play with this objective more for propaganda than reality. And on the Western side there has been a discouraging reluctance to treat the possibility with much imagination or initiative.

There is nothing new in the idea of convening a conference on European security—except the changing political mood and attitude in Europe. In Willy Brandt's words: "Facts have come into being in the last twenty-five years which we cannot simply reverse. We must proceed from their existence if we are to move forward."

This was certainly not the reaction in the West back in 1954 when Molotov trotted out the Communist proposal for a security conference for the first time. It was seen then, quite correctly, as nothing more than a crude attempt to block final ratification in the West of the Allied agreements to bring West Germany into NATO. The Soviets surfaced their plan again in 1958. Meanwhile, Poland brought forth the Rapacki Plan for a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe. Gromyko repeated the Russian call for a security conference at the United Nations in December of 1964, and this was followed by similar overtures in Warsaw Pact communiqués after meetings in Bucharest in July, 1966, and at Karlsbad in April, 1967.

Then came the invasion of Czechoslovakia by Soviet troops in August of 1968. In the aftermath, trying to plaster over their own cracks and restore a peace-loving image to the Communist world, the Russians renewed the call for a security conference in the "Budapest Appeal" in March, 1969. The timing was calculated, for this was the eve of the gathering of NATO foreign ministers in Washington for a meeting to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Atlantic Alliance. NATO's response, needless to say, was to ignore completely an appeal which was seen as nothing more than a bid for a seal of approval on the subjugation of Prague. But by the fall of 1969, as the NATO ministers approached their semi-annual December meeting in Brussels, the picture was changing.

Brandt's New Deal

In the West, the big change was Willy Brandt's narrow victory in the West German elections last October, and the formation of a new Bonn coalition government dominated by the Social Democrats, prepared to abandon the rigidities of the Adenauer foreign policy of the last twenty years and embark on an entirely new and dynamic course of *Ostpolitik*. In no time at all, Brandt's government changed all of the old terms of reference, and tossed out all of the clichés and dogmas in which discourse about West Germany had been locked. In the old days, it was compulsory to speak of the goals of reunification and a Big Power peace treaty settling the German question as if they were not only desirable but achievable. Now it is possible to acknowledge the reality of the two German states, East and West, and of the Oder-Niese boundary between East Germany and Poland. Berlin used to be regarded as the political symbol of Bonn's right to rule all Germany. It has suddenly become possible and acceptable to downgrade West Berlin politically without in any way abandoning the city, or its ties with West Germany and the right of its citizens to live in freedom. Trade and normalization of relations with the East bloc have replaced reunification as the dominant controlling element of Bonn foreign policy. Out the window went the Hallstein Doctrine, according to which West Germany broke diplomatic relations with any state

injudicious enough to recognize East Germany. This fundamental shift in the ice cap has been accomplished by Brandt in a very short span of time. Moreover, at every step of the way he has had the support of his countrymen, with approval of his policies running twenty to thirty percentage points higher than the percentage of the vote which brought the Social Democrats to power. Why? There is one simple demographic reason which, indeed, is basic to the whole changing mood in Europe. West Germans who were fifteen years old when the war ended are now forty years old. Under Brandt's leadership, they are taking the future into their hands, and they are carrying their country with them.

Brandt's *Ostpolitik* has already shown not only that acceptance of the conditions of territorial status quo in Europe is politically possible but that there are clear political advantages to be gained by the West in doing so. This is John Foster Dulles' "rollback" in an entirely new form. In the Dulles-Adenauer days a meeting between the heads of government of the two Germanies would have been unthinkable. But when Brandt journeyed to Erfurt in East Germany for his first meeting with his opposite, Communist Premier Willy Stoph, his arrival and his appearance on the East German television screens sent such a wave of hope and excitement through the citizens of East Germany that it almost became too hot for the Communist regime to handle. Brandt's bold political initiative to break with past dogma and place within reach of the East German regime what it says it wants above all other prizes—recognition as a state—aroused the most anxious anticipation in the East. So strong was this surge of expectation that the Communist East German regime seemed in need of inventing excuses to call off the second scheduled meeting between Brandt and Stoph at Kassel in West Germany. Brandt, through the channel which he had opened up in Moscow in negotiations for a mutual declaration of nonuse of force, then sent categorical assurances to the Russians that the last thing he wanted to see was trouble in East Germany. His special envoy to Moscow, Egon Bahr, told the Russians, as earnestly and forcefully as he could, that West Germany was in no

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EUROPE

way trying to undermine the Ulbricht-Stoph regime (which seems to have enough internal troubles as it is). Bahr assured Moscow that Bonn saw clearly that trouble or political agitation in favor of Willy Brandt in the East could only be a setback for the kind of understanding he was trying to achieve, not only between the two Germanies but in Moscow and Warsaw as well.

In any other hands but those of Willy Brandt these Russian-German negotiations would be rousing fears in Europe of something as disastrous as another Hitler-Stalin pact. But it is a good fortune of history that Willy Brandt, the illegitimate son of a Lübeck waitress, who fought the Nazi Brownshirt toughs as a Social Democrat in the street battles before Hitler came to power, and who then went on fighting Nazism in Norway and Sweden during World War II, should now emerge tested and annealed as the head of government of Europe's largest and strongest state. Brandt is not only carrying the majority of his countrymen—particularly the postwar generation—with him completely in his *Ostpolitik*; he also has a remarkable degree of the confidence of dozens of other European statesmen and political leaders.

"I was present in the Cabinet Room at No. 10 Downing Street on Brandt's visit to London when he outlined his *Ostpolitik*," recounts a high British official. "He spoke for forty-five minutes without a note, in English, and it was the most beautifully organized and immaculately presented outline imaginable. He did not waste a word, and by the time he concluded he had already answered almost every question which was in our minds. He had examined all of the pitfalls and dangers, described the limits beyond which he would not go, and left our ministers with very little to say except to congratulate him and give him their confidence. It was a performance which would have done credit to any of our most erudite and experienced men."

Brandt's negotiating tactics have been as reassuring to his Western Allies as are his personal and intellectual qualities. In the first place, he has given equal weight in his foreign policy to enlargement of the Euro-

pean Common Market and the consolidation of Western Europe. He is not, in other words, remotely seeking to play off his ties with the West or Germany's place in democratic Europe to make a deal with Russia.

Moreover, Brandt told the Russians at the outset that the "normalization" which he is trying to achieve in relations with Moscow, with Poland over the Oder-Niese question, with his acceptance of the existence of the two Germanies has to be part of a package which must also include a normalization of the status quo in Berlin. He has told the Russians and the Poles that West Germany will neither conclude nor approve agreements with Moscow and Warsaw without a concomitant agreement between Russia and the Western Allies on Berlin. For this reason, the four-power Berlin talks which the Russians first hinted about in June, 1969, and which finally got under way in April, 1970, are now the linchpin to Brandt's whole *Ostpolitik*.

More than that, Berlin will be the key to the overall question of a European security agreement—just as solution of the Polish question and a definition of Poland's borders were the key to success at the Congress of Vienna. There seems to be little difficulty involved in Brandt and West Germany's working out a declaration of nonuse of force with the Soviet Union and adding other elements to it such as increased trade, airline rights, opening of consulates, and cultural exchanges. Nor, in the end, is a formula for recognition of the Oder-Niese line with Poland an impossibility. These are agreements which both Moscow and Warsaw seem to be ready, if not anxious, to achieve. But they are not particularly anxious to forswear trouble-making in Berlin, and by linking everything in a package deal Brandt has considerably strengthened and reassured the Western Allies.

Shall we dance?

So successful has Brandt been in seizing the diplomatic initiative in Europe that doubts are being expressed in other Western European capitals whether the Soviet Union is now genuinely interested in a European security conference. Among other things, it has been noted that Leonid I. Brezhnev, the Soviet Communist Party Secretary-general and

dominant Russian leader, did not even refer to the proposal in his long and turgid address on the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth. Normally such a proposal would have been included if it were basic Russian policy and a major Soviet objective. Certainly it has been true for the last three years at least that backing for the security conference idea has been a great deal livelier and stronger among the satellites than it has been in Moscow. Poland in particular has been extremely active.

In any case, doubt whether or not the Soviet Union is really enthusiastic about its own proposal for a security conference does not explain the West's failure to grasp the diplomatic opportunity. The lesson of Brandt's success in the last six months—that the status quo can be exploited while being accepted—is slowly being borne in on NATO governments. A scale of enthusiasm among NATO countries for a security conference, even if it were just for the sake of holding a conference, would begin probably with the Danes and run down through the Norwegians, the Belgians, and the Dutch. Those who rate "cautiously yes" are the Germans, the British, and the Italians. The American position so far has been "cautiously no," but it is swinging around to a cautious yes. Although Turkish public opinion seems to welcome the prospect, Turkish officials are concerned about neutralist trends in their country and worry about the effect a security conference might have.

France is probably the European power most negative toward the idea. This is in part an ironic legacy of Gaullism: General de Gaulle took the leading role in seeking East-West détente by withdrawing French forces from NATO and all but breaking with the alliance completely, proclaiming a policy of ending the Big Power blocs, and visiting Russia, Poland, and Rumania in pursuit of his aims. Now it is West Germany to whom the initiative has passed, and the French are reacting with suspicion and warnings against hasty action or deals without a quid pro quo.

On the other hand, one result of the Brandt initiative has been to speed France's reversal of General de Gaulle's policy of keeping Britain out of Europe. "Consolidation of



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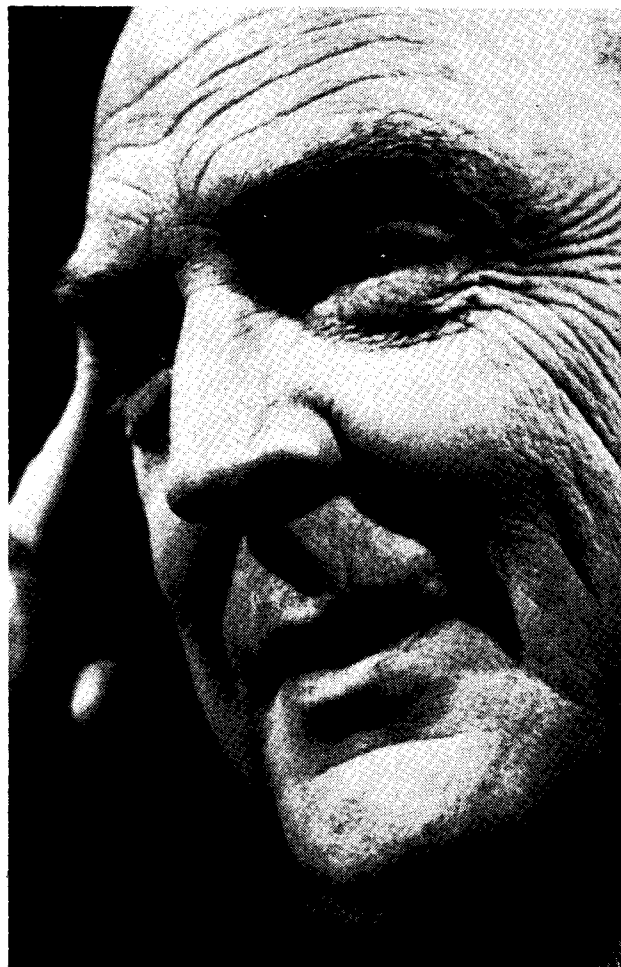


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Western Europe" has replaced "dissolution of the power blocs" in French priorities; it is preached as if consistency were one of the highest qualities of French foreign policy.

What therefore seems gradually to be emerging in Western Europe is a general feeling that a European security conference must now become a common objective. If the Communist side begins to run away from its own proposals out of fear that recognition of a European status quo might suddenly start working to its disadvantage—well, that need not be an embarrassment to the West.

Another important element in the emerging consensus is the feeling that any eventual meeting should not be a "negotiating conference" on the pattern of the Congress of Vienna. It should rather be a "ribbon ceremony conference" designed to put a multilateral seal of approval on the kind of bilateral negotiations now going on in the SALT talks, between Bonn and Warsaw over the Oder-Niesse line, between the two Germanies, and above all among the "big four" over some permanent definition of traffic arrangements and political agreement on Berlin. A

twentieth-century European security conference could of course decorate the package with cultural, trade, and other clauses and agreements.

For the United States, the main topic of interest is a mutual, balanced reduction in forces. The objective is a reasonable one, but there is a certain chicken-and-egg quality about how to go about achieving it—particularly in view of the Mansfield resolution to cut troops in Germany and the lack of any clear indication of where the Nixon Administration really stands on the question of American force levels in NATO after July of 1971. It would seem to make more diplomatic sense for Washington to tie force reductions to a Berlin agreement and a successful European Security Conference than to follow a piecemeal course the other way around, as seems to be happening.

What made the Congress of Vienna a success was the degree of mutual self-interest—and with that the determination—on the part of all the powers to achieve a settlement which would ensure peace. Ideological considerations then were not nearly so divisive as they are today. But they did exist in 1815. It was national

interest rather than ideological interest which prevailed.

In his wonderfully lucid and readable study of the Congress of Vienna written a quarter of a century ago in the immediate aftermath of World War II, Harold Nicolson warns that "to accept analogies too readily would be to surrender to egocentric illusion." We can learn little from history, he says, unless we first realize that she does not, in fact, repeat herself.

"Since circumstances vary from generation to generation it is illusive to suppose that any pattern of history, however similar it may first appear, is likely to repeat itself exactly in the kaleidoscope of time. Whether or no one believes that events are influenced by individuals or individuals by events, it must be recognized that the combinations of circumstances are governed as much by invisible as by visible factors, as much by the unapparent as by the apparent."

Still, the Congress of Vienna lives on in history and romantic minds, and Europe could do a lot worse than to try to repeat its success.

—DON COOK



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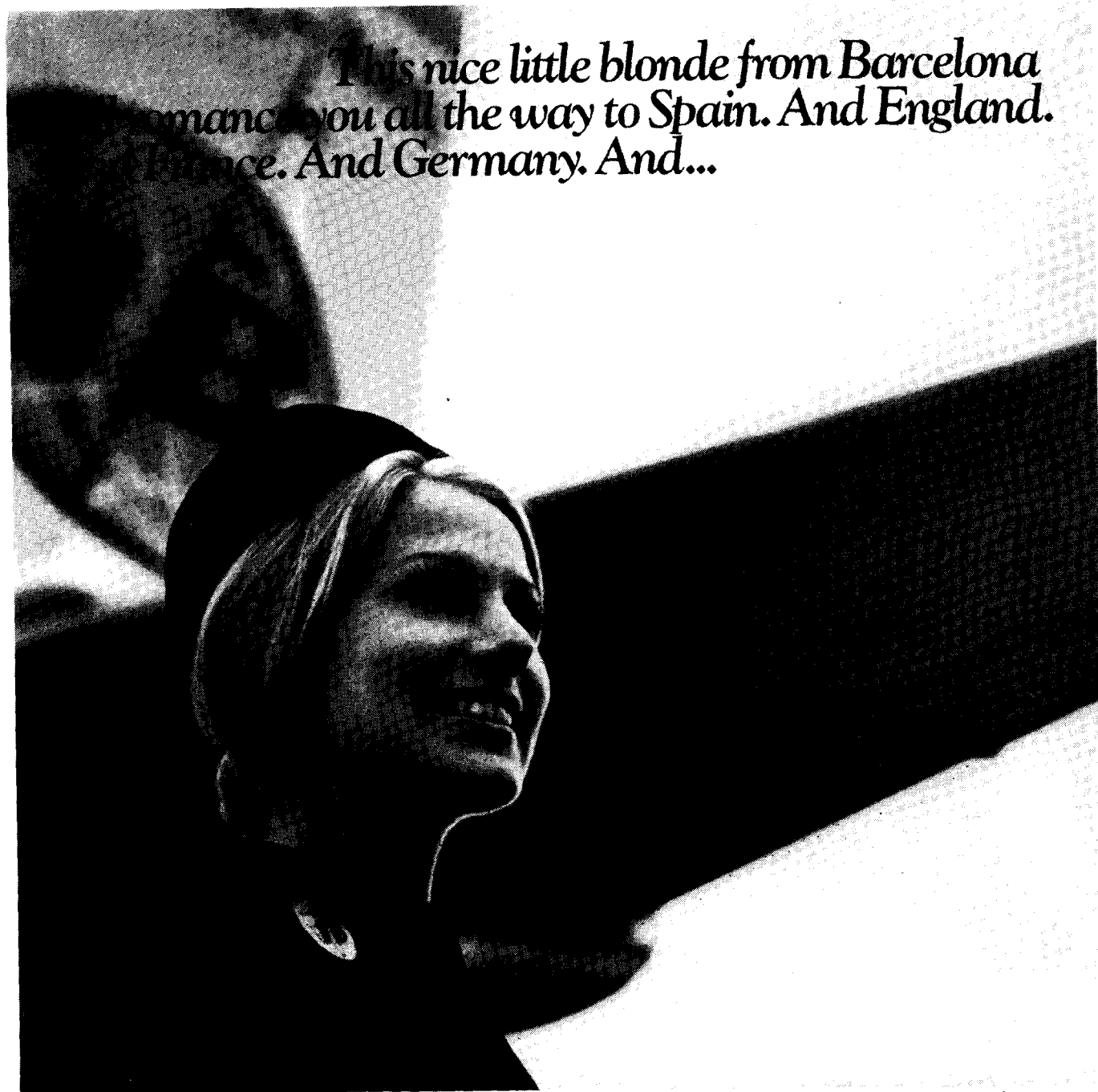
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Prince Norodom Sihanouk wrote those words—now so ironic—in an article for the April edition of *Pacific Community*. They were true when he wrote them. But before the printer's ink was dry, the Prince was deposed, and along with him went the delicate diplomatic and political balance which had so successfully kept Cambodia out of the Vietnam holocaust.

Once those restraints were gone, how quickly the Cambodian situation deteriorated! Within weeks all the beasts were out of their cages. The government encouraged ancient racial hatreds, and shortly, rafts of bloated corpses were floating down the Mekong River. Security in the border regions vanished once the



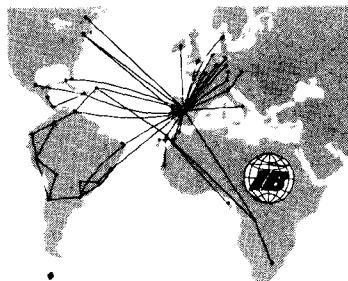
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fragile truce with the Viet Cong was broken. The first quarter of 1970 ended with burning villages, roads clogged with refugees, and the full-scale destruction of invading South Vietnamese and American armor sending up rooster tails of dust across the paddies and dry tapioca fields of Cambodia.

In Pnompenh, in the weeks immediately following the coup, there was a pathetic air of unreality and naïveté; of a lovely, peaceful country about to plunge itself into war. Old French tanks stood in the streets, their crews asleep underneath them in the sticky afternoons of the Southeast Asian hot season. Students, clutching their belongings in cardboard suitcases and bundles done up with bits of string, paraded in the streets on their way to join the army. They laughed and waved and sang brave songs as they climbed onto the trucks. It was 1914. It was "We don't want to lose you/But we think you ought to go," and "We won't be back till it's over over there."

It was a time of uncertainty, for no one knew if Sihanouk would soon return, and those who plotted against him were jittery and nervous. Two National Assemblymen, who had gone to the town of Kompongcham on the Mekong to explain to the people why the God King was gone, were torn limb from limb by an angry mob. It was reported that Prime Minister Lon Nol's own brother had also been killed, his liver torn from his body and cooked and eaten on the street in the time-honored Cambodian manner.

And on the bridge leading into Pnompenh across the Tonle Sap another angry crowd had been turned back with considerable loss of life by a fusillade from the government troops sent out to meet them. The government announced a figure for the number of people killed, but the major who opened fire confided that he had killed a lot more than that, and he drove us out to the bridge at night to show us the blood stains in the road. Coming back across the bridge he showed us where other victims had been tied up in rice sacks and thrown into the water.

With a colleague, Burton Pines, I met the Major in a French sidewalk café for a beer. He told us of his

background with the Vietnamese paratroopers during the French war, at Dienbienphu, and afterwards in the Viet prison camps. He said he had a photograph of himself with the legendary French Para, Colonel Bigeard, but I never saw it.

With him was a sleek, slim, handsome man with curly black hair, a clipped mustache, and a swashbuckling air. He could have been a stand-in for Omar Sharif. He had been an organizer of the mob that sacked the North Vietnamese and Provisional Revolutionary Government embassies, and he said he was a leader of the Khmer Kampuchea Krom (K.K.K.), the ethnic Cambodians who live in the regions of South Vietnam that were once part of the great Khmer empire. The K.K.K. troops were trained by the U. S. Special Forces as mobile strike forces in Vietnam, and they are now in Pnompenh to bolster up Lon Nol's ill-trained army.

Omar and the Major took us out to see what Omar said were K.K.K. troops drilling in the night with brand-new Soviet-designed AK-47 automatic rifles. The Major said they were part of a shipment destined for the Viet Cong which the Cambodian army had siphoned off for their own use. We drove in the Major's Peugeot while a Land Rover full of troops followed at a discreet distance. Omar wore his sport shirt with one button undone, to allow easy access to a .45 automatic under his arm, which he pulled out to impress us. He wondered if we could get him a lightweight .38, the kind the CIA men wear. But what he really wanted was for us to get him twenty "talky-walkies" from Hong Kong.

Our nighttime tour of the defenses of Pnompenh moved on to the Major's favorite bar. There wasn't anybody else there, so the bar girls made a big fuss over the Major while Omar sat with his back to the wall making a big thing out of watching the doors. Next we ended up in Omar's favorite nightclub; this time the boys in the Land Rover were invited in for a drink. Omar, .45 bulging in his armpit and all, grabbed the mike and crooned while the band accompanied him and the Cambodian troops shuffled about the dance floor in their baggy fatigues. "Look at those Cambodian pigs dancing with their hats on," a chic Vietnamese bar girl muttered.

It was as if the movie *If . . .* had come true: the schoolboys had locked the headmaster out and they were playing with guns; funny, except that the guns were real, and all the time one knew this wasn't an isolated banana republic rebellion. Those who knew something about real war—the North Vietnamese and, as it turned out, the South Vietnamese and the Americans too—would soon come in and take the game away from them.

Short stick

The "anxieties of a domestic order" rather than his handling of the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese finally brought Sihanouk down. Sihanouk's foreign policy aimed at keeping Cambodia independent, unaligned, and out of the war. He compromised with the "Viet Minh," as he liked to call all Vietnamese Communists, because he knew what has now been so dramatically proved—that the Cambodian army could not possibly force them out of the country. Therefore he allowed them their sanctuaries and he allowed them to transship supplies through Cambodia. In return the Viet Cong were to stay in the forests, as far away from the Cambodian population as possible.

Sihanouk tried to limit and control the activities of the Vietnamese Communists, but as a Cambodian official once said: "We Cambodians prefer to use the carrot rather than the stick with the Viet Minh because we have such a short stick."

Of course, the Americans would have been delighted to provide the stick in order to strike at the sanctuaries. "But the Prince knows the lesson of Vietnam," one of Sihanouk's advisers said two years ago. "If the Americans come they will cause untold destruction and misery. They will kill a few Viet Minh, but they will kill Cambodians too and when they are gone the Viet Minh will return."

Prince Sihanouk had no illusions about the Vietnamese Communists. In that same article for *Pacific Community* Sihanouk wrote: "We wonder if, when the war ends, those [North Vietnamese and Viet Cong] soldiers will indeed return to their own country. Even if they keep their promise, they can bring very heavy pressure to bear on our regime by

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CAMBODIA

activating our own Communist rebels and furnishing them generously with weapons, cadres and money. . . ." Sihanouk remembered the end of the first Indochina war in 1954 when the Viet Minh at first refused to leave Cambodia, and only his adroit maneuvering at Geneva saved the country from partition.

Another irony of the Cambodian coup is that during the year and a half before it, Sihanouk was bringing increasing pressure to bear against the Vietnamese on his soil. Whereas formerly he would not admit to their presence, he now began to denounce the "Viet Minh" in Cambodia, saying that they were virtually occupying large areas of Cambodian territory.

Cambodian troops and Viet Cong forces engaged in fighting during the last months of 1968 and during 1969, but Sihanouk was careful never to push the Vietnamese too far. For example, when his forces took North Vietnamese or Viet Cong prisoners, they were put on public display in the capital of Phnompenh. Once he made his point Sihanouk would quietly release them into custody of their embassy. By these tactics he hoped to isolate them diplomatically—to throw the international spotlight on their activities. Militarily he hoped to keep their activities under some sort of supervision and control without going so far as to provoke a full-scale attack. He didn't want the Vietnamese Communists to start feeling at home on Cambodian soil, but rather than expel them while the Vietnam War went on, he mainly tried to ensure their swift departure once the war ended. He exacted a pledge to this effect from both the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong, but he had little faith in their promises. Still, the Prince's policy did work as a restraint on the Vietnamese Communists. It limited their areas of activity and for the most part they left his people alone. Most important for Cambodia, the war stayed on the Vietnamese side of the border.

It was a subtle game that Sihanouk was playing. The necessity for subtlety may have escaped certain elements of the army who came to feel that they could handle the situation better than the Prince. This op-

position would not have been sufficient to defeat Sihanouk. The extra push to downfall came from the frustrations and ambitions of the Cambodian elite.

The Prince was a genuinely popular leader among the great mass of Cambodians. The peasants considered him a God King in the Buddhist tradition and they literally worshiped him. Once, when protesting a border incident, Sihanouk said: "I love Buddha, and to me all seven millions of Cambodians are all small Buddhas. I venerate them. I do not want them to die." He referred to Cambodians as his "children." As for the educated elite of the country, they wanted to be considered neither as his children nor as small Buddhas. They were embarrassed by his antics, and they chafed under his capricious, egotistical, and arbitrary rule. There was no room at the top unless the Prince said so. Once, for example, Sihanouk invited the press to the opening of a jute factory in Batambang Province. A mild-looking man, whose task apparently was to explain the factory to the foreign press, stepped up to a blackboard with a piece of chalk in his hand. Before he could begin, Sihanouk snatched the chalk from his hand and waved him into the background. As the Prince proceeded to expound to the press, everyone thought: how humiliating for the poor fellow. He is probably the plant manager and this was to have been his big day. The man was not the plant manager. He was a Cabinet minister.

Even the Prince's hobby, making movies, annoyed many of the elite. No one in the country could escape the Prince's high-handed central casting. Generals and Cabinet ministers could be called out on location by royal command to play parts Sihanouk chose for them. "I suppose it's better than his last craze, badminton," one of Sihanouk's advisers once remarked. "We used to have to go around to the palace and knock the shuttlecock about until three in the morning."

In retrospect Sihanouk's greatest political mistake was not to have recognized the depth of this frustration among the elite and to believe that his popularity among the masses and his royal authority would be enough to retain control even after he turned over much of the machinery of power to his ministers. The

dangerous period for an absolute monarchy is when it starts to liberalize, and although Sihanouk had abdicated long before, his regime was the closest thing to an absolute monarchy left in East Asia.

The liberalizing process began with the election of September, 1966. Previously, Sihanouk personally chose all the candidates for the one-party National Assembly and the Cabinet as well. But in 1966 he endorsed any members of the "Sangkum," Cambodia's "popular socialist community," who could muster the nominating petitions. The result was a National Assembly to the right of the previous one. It chose General Lon Nol as Prime Minister. In order to provide some opposition to the one-party government, and also to pacify the Cambodian left, Sihanouk took the extraordinary step of setting up a "countergovernment," a kind of shadow cabinet with no real power except to criticize, but nevertheless an opposition of sorts.

In January, 1967, while Prince Sihanouk was in France, Lon Nol deployed the army against the Khmer Rouge (Cambodian Communists) with considerable vigor. The Cambodian left felt that Lon Nol had moved with too much vigor, and in the crisis that followed, Sihanouk returned from France accusing "certain personalities" of conspiring against him. The Prince felt that Lon Nol was getting too powerful, and might have removed him from office. But matters never came to a head because Lon Nol was involved in a serious automobile accident and had to resign.

In March, 1968, Lon Nol was back in the Cabinet, and in July he became First Deputy Prime Minister. By this time the great historical watershed of LBJ's turnaround in Vietnam had come to pass, and believing that the danger of a U.S. invasion had decreased, Sihanouk began to swing toward the West. As soon as the United States was committed to withdrawal from Vietnam, Sihanouk sought America's friendship. He was looking for a lever against the presence of the "Viet Minh," whose withdrawal he could not count upon.

Cambodia had severed diplomatic relations with the United States in 1965; in July, 1968, they were restored. A general desire for economic reform coincided with these diplo-

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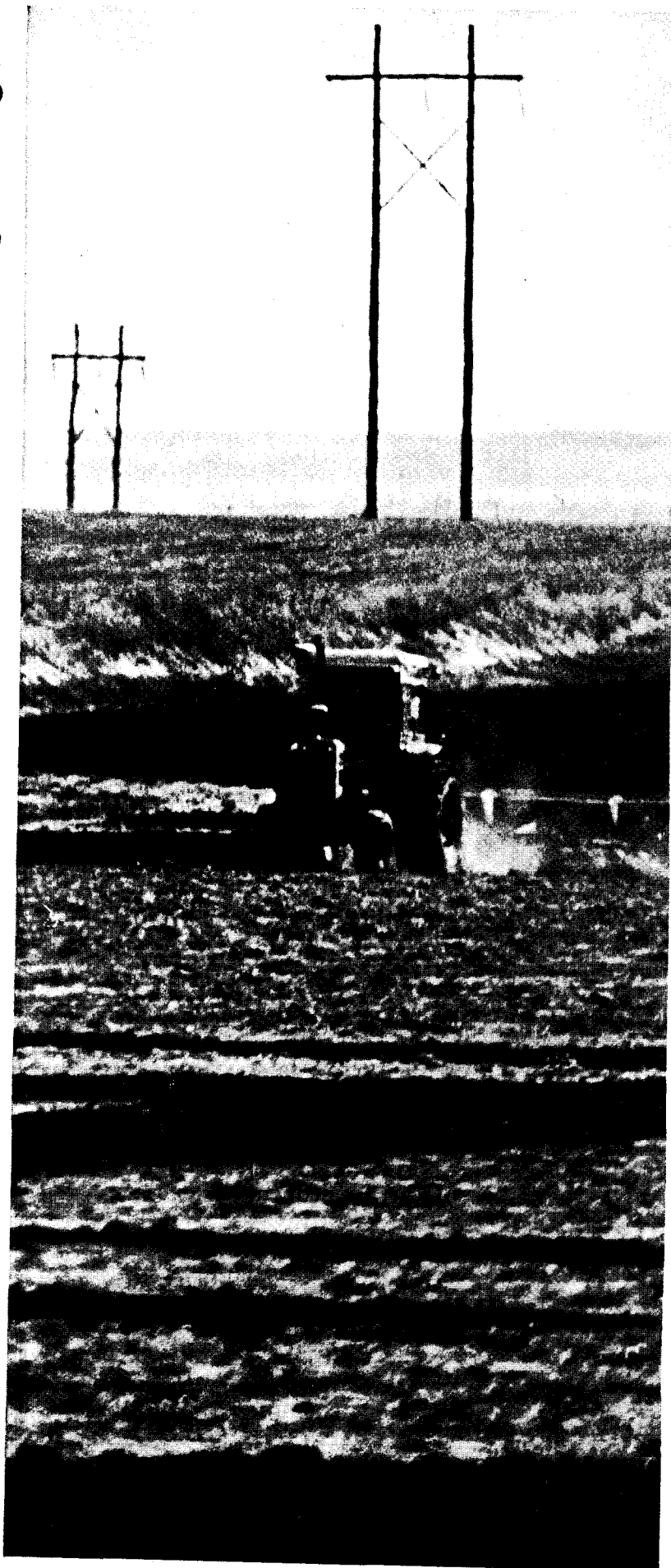
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CAMBODIA

matic edges toward the West, and it became increasingly clear that the man chosen to carry out these policies was the oft abused but still faithful Lon Nol. In August of 1969, the National Congress met and formed a new government. Lon Nol received the most votes for Prime Minister, and Sihanouk's cousin, Prince Sisowath Sirik Matak, was second. Sihanouk said that on the new government's shoulders rested the country's "last chance" to rectify its many economic difficulties, and he called it the "Government of National Salvation."

General Lon Nol, fifty-six, a soft-spoken, intelligent, but slow-thinking man, has been part of Cambodia's political-military establishment for twenty years. Next to Sihanouk himself he is probably the most popular man in the country, and his political strength lies in the loyalty of the army.

Sirik Matak, also fifty-six, is a member of the Sisowath branch of the royal family and therefore was by birth a rival of Sihanouk's. Over the years he has often clashed publicly with his cousin's policies. The quick-witted, scholarly, aristocratic Sirik Matak and the slower, more cautious Lon Nol have been close friends and confidants for years. In the sense that both of them believed that Sihanouk had gone too far in his accommodation with the Communists and that the government-controlled economy ought to be reformed, both of them were politically right of the Cambodian center.

Many Cambodians describe the formation of the Government of National Salvation as a bloodless coup. For until that time the office of Prime Minister was little more than a rubber stamp for Sihanouk. This time, however, Lon Nol and Sirik Matak balked at serving until Sihanouk agreed to transfer much of the power to the office of Prime Minister. The Prince gave in; Lon Nol became Prime Minister, and Sirik Matak First Deputy Prime Minister.

The first test of wills between Sihanouk and the new government came during the National Congress of December, 1969. Sihanouk saw that power was slipping from his grasp. It looked as if he might topple his new government, but he could not muster

the support he wanted, and in January he went to France for his annual health cure in Grasse.

It is likely that the Cambodian demonstrations against the Viet Cong, which began on March 8 of this year in the Parrot's Beak, were organized by the government in order to maneuver the absent Sihanouk into taking a tougher stand against the Communists. On March 11, soldiers in mufti and students formed up in the capital and marched to the embassies of North Vietnam and the (Viet Cong) Provisional Revolutionary Government of Vietnam. The Cambodians are traditional enemies of the Vietnamese; for centuries Cambodia has felt like an Asian Poland squeezed between Vietnam and Thailand. The mob needed little encouragement to sack both embassies. It was an anti-Vietnamese demonstration, however, not an anti-Sihanouk demonstration, and many of the students carried portraits of the Prince. In March the government began its final confrontation with the Prince, and events swiftly outran both the plans and the calculations of the protagonists. Within a week, in a way which neither Sihanouk nor his ministers foresaw, the Prince was deposed and Cambodia disintegrated into war.

Sihanouk's first reaction was to refuse to be maneuvered. He denounced those who would turn Cambodia into a "second Laos." But instead of returning at once he continued his scheduled trip to Moscow and Peking hoping to use the demonstration as a bargaining lever against the "Viet Minh." Had he returned at once, Lon Nol's troops might have groveled at his feet. The government offered to send a delegation to negotiate, but Sihanouk refused to see them. He badly miscalculated, for the government now felt cornered, and even the reluctant Lon Nol, who seems to have been Sihanouk's Brutus, became convinced that the government's survival depended on overthrowing the Prince.

After Sihanouk was deposed on March 18, tragedy followed quickly upon tragedy. At first Lon Nol and Sirik Matak hoped to negotiate with the Viet Cong and the North Vietnamese. But with Sihanouk gone they quickly suspended diplomatic relations with the Communists. What began as anti-Vietnamese demonstrations grew into appalling

atrocities against innocent civilians. The Viet Cong began to call the Cambodian army's bluff, and within a fortnight the Americans and the South Vietnamese had invaded.

Prince Sihanouk has thrown his lot in with the Communists, realizing that the West would not lift a finger to help him and that the Communists were his only chance to regain power. He chose exile in China, hoping that the Chinese would help him maintain a measure of independence from the Vietnamese. But his neutrality is now compromised, and it is hard to imagine how he could ever again effectively restore the status quo ante.

Sihanouk always mistrusted the United States, but in Sihanouk the U.S. had someone much more useful than a friend. For even though the Cambodian sanctuaries were a military liability they could be lived with. The neutrality of Sihanouk's Cambodia was a considerable political asset. Neither the Communists nor the United States particularly liked Sihanouk's brand of neutrality, but Sihanouk's Cambodia was acceptable to all the parties involved in the Vietnam War. Cambodia could have served as both a bridge and a buffer between East and West when the time came to make peace. Ironically, a right-wing, pro-American regime in Cambodia is not in our interest, for it would tend to depend on the United States.

The move into Cambodia may have bought the Lon Nol government a little time. In any case, it may require massive American aid in order to survive. Already American military planes are flying in and out of Pnompenh, and the type of American advisers who are everywhere in Vientiane are to be seen in Pnompenh's better restaurants. In the long run, the political loss of extending the war into Cambodia may prove greater than the military gain. For the reality of the Vietnam war is that, unless we are prepared to invade North Vietnam and perhaps China, there are always going to be sanctuaries.

—H. D. S. GREENWAY

REPORT CONTRIBUTORS

Elizabeth B. Drew is the *Atlantic's* Washington editor. Don Cook is Paris correspondent for the *Los Angeles Times*. H.D.S. Greenway has reported from Indochina for *Time* for the last three years.

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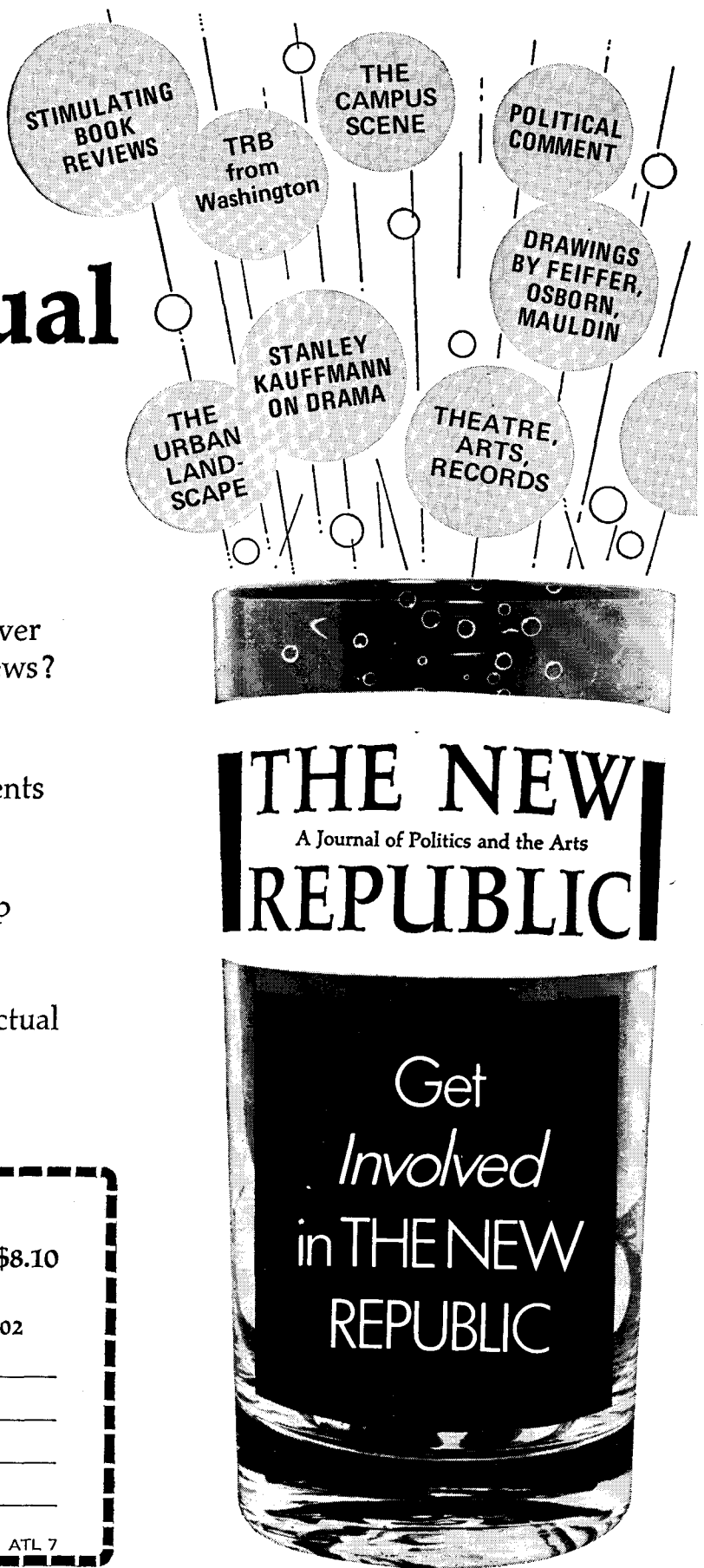
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THE NEW REPUBLIC

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The Black Panthers

SIR: In his May article "Panthers Against the Wall," Don Schanche refers to "the obscene and race-baiting *Black Panther* weekly."

While some of the ghetto dialect used in the paper is a bit strong for middle-class sensibilities, this propaganda organ of the only major black militant organization to welcome white support unceasingly attacks capitalism as the root of the oppression of the black community, while black racism is constantly condemned. Mr. Schanche's comment is at the least ignorant, or is calculated libel.

Today Eldridge Cleaver, in all probability, is sick; his rhetoric has gone over the brink. But Mr. Schanche has not a word about the possibility that our society has driven him and other militants crazy with grief and anguish. In *Soul on Ice*, which was published in 1968, Cleaver proved himself to be a perceptive and eloquent analyst of racist America. Under the strains imposed on him, especially in the last two years, his current rhetoric is understandable though not to be condoned.

FRANK L. FOX
Meadville Theological School
Chicago, Ill.

SIR: It is interesting to find out from Mr. Schanche that the breakfast program which the Panthers began was really only a thinly disguised "front . . . for imparting party dogma in ever-younger minds." Here all this time I thought that many ghetto kids *did* go to school hungry every morning and that feeding them was a service to the community. I also foolishly supposed that the ghetto kids already knew the score from living in the ghetto. I hardly sup-

posed they had to be told about police tactics by the Panthers, or that they were black and what that meant in the economic system.

DAVID C. DAVIS
San Diego, Calif.

SIR: In describing the "insane" urge for "self-destruction" of the Black Panthers, Mr. Schanche is satisfied with the most superficial of factual data. He mentions Bobby Seale's "[demand] that he be destroyed," but Mr. Schanche omits the fact that Seale's major demand was that Judge Hoffman recognize Bobby's constitutional right to defend himself. Judge Hoffman refused to permit what the Constitution guarantees.

When illustrating the insanity of the New York Panther 21, Mr. Schanche again focuses on the effects of the Panther 21 courtroom appearance. He neglects the prohibitive and unfair \$100,000 bail that Judge Murtagh assessed each of the 21, the fact that the defendants were kept for approximately nine months in separate jails, and the fact that improper medical treatment for an epileptic Panther resulted in his hospitalization. The man had his trial postponed because of "illness," according to newspapers; his illness was the ill treatment he received in jail.

STEPHEN COLLETTA
Austin, Tex.

SIR: Don Schanche makes a good point with his suggestion that the Black Panthers and other quasi-military youth organizations are analogous to the scouting movement, yet I think he underestimates the gullibility of white middle-class youth. Jerry Rubin may have reached adulthood with no lingering yearnings for the sense of solidarity provided by militaristic youth groups; the

same cannot be said of the student radicals of my acquaintance. Tap a member of the SDS and you will probably get a former Boy Scout.

HEATHER HILL
Philadelphia, Penn.

SIR: There has certainly been some police overreaction to the Panthers, most notably in Chicago, but in many cases the police response was justified in terms which liberals generally set. In Los Angeles, the police took along tear gas and used it when they encountered resistance. In the ensuing gun battle more policemen than Panthers were injured, and the Panthers were found to be storing weapons like machine guns in violation of the law.

The basic trouble is that the police took seriously the Panthers avowed threat to kill policemen and their circulation of coloring books designed to show children how to accomplish this. Liberals have tended to dismiss such things as mere "rhetoric." Who is behaving more like racists, the policemen who believe what the Panthers say, or the liberals who do not?

As for Oakland, it should be noted that this city has never had a riot although its population is at least one-third black. The police chief himself lives in a black neighborhood. The police department circulates complaint forms throughout the city and acts quite vigorously on such complaints that come in. Approximately 20 percent of all complaints are found to be justified, as contrasted with 3 or 4 percent in New York City and elsewhere.

No one except those on the grand jury who indicted Huey Newton knows all the facts concerning his case. A black witness who testified before the grand jury refused to tes-

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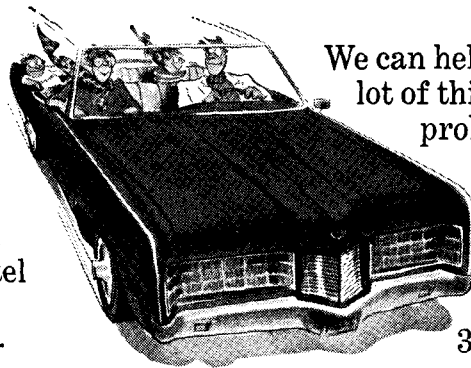
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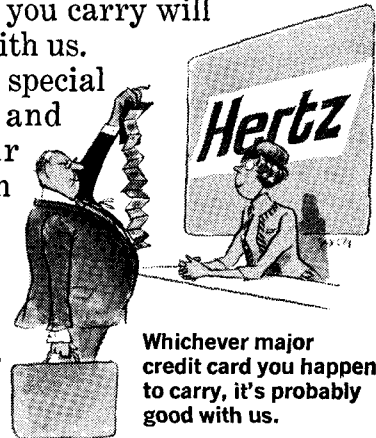
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tify at the trial. Was this the result of Panther intimidation? We do know from reading Eldridge Cleaver's latest book that Newton seemed determined to kill a policeman.

The extent to which the Panthers represent the black community can be gauged in an election a few years ago in which they ran Mrs. Eldridge Cleaver for alderwoman. Running from an all-black constituency against other black candidates, she received 8 percent of the vote.

The court tactics adopted by the Panthers may seem "suicidal," but what if the Panthers using them are guilty of the crimes with which they are charged? In that case, they would seem to have been quite successful in delaying their trials and stirring up radical anger and liberal guilt to the point where numbers of people are ready to absolve them in advance.

If this seems somewhat distrustful of the Panthers, then apparently it is a distrust that is shared by Cleaver himself. In his latest book, he says that there was only one member of the Black Panther Party that he ever "trusted or truly thought was sincere." (See page 25 of *Post-Prison Writing*, paperback edition.)

GEORGE BERKLEY
Northeastern University
Boston, Mass.

Don Schanche replies:

Mr. Colletta of Austin, Texas, accuses me of omitting "the fact that Seale's major demand was that Judge Hoffman recognize Bobby's constitutional right to defend himself." My point, admittedly not spelled out in detail but presumably clear to anyone who followed the trial and is familiar with the American judicial system, was that the appeals process guarantees Seale's right if it is constitutionally valid (which I think it is), a fact which Seale knew *before* he adopted his obstreperous courtroom tactics. Having made a record at the opening of the trial, I think, he had only to wait decorously for an appeals court or the Supreme Court to upset any verdict which followed. Whether he meant to illustrate how unjust the system is, or deliberately to deprive himself of the protection of the system, is something only Bobby Seale knows.

Mr. Fox of Meadville Theological School clearly has not followed the steady flow of anti-Semitism (a surprising lapse for a Unitarian divine)

or the often obscene language of the *Black Panther* weekly if he is put off by my reference to it as "obscene and race-baiting"; or else he thinks that race-baiting is strictly a black-white affair and that "ghetto dialect" is perforce not obscene simply because it is frequently used on the streets. If I characterize the words which often appear in the *Black Panther* as obscene, I do not think I am engaging in calculated libel, as Mr. Fox charges, but only offering what I consider to be a reasonable opinion. To add that "Mr. Schanche has not a word about the possibility that our society has driven him [Cleaver] and other militants crazy with grief and anguish" is to miss the whole point of my piece, because that is precisely what I tried to say.

Mr. Davis of San Diego quite correctly points out that many ghetto kids go to school hungry and that feeding them is a service to the community. But the kids in the Panthers' breakfast program have to sit through a thirty-minute revolutionary harangue with their oatmeal, which I think is a service neither to them nor to the community.

Sorry, Wrong Number

SIR: I wonder if Ray Mungo ("If Mr. Thoreau Calls . . .," *May Atlantic*) has ever seen Thoreau's remark that "no people ever lived by cursing their fathers, however great a curse their fathers might have been to them." It's true America's youth may feel pretty keenly the "curse" their fathers were, and are, to them, but isn't Mr. Mungo a little harsh when he remarks that "all we know of American history would make us anxious to leave"?

No one can deny that industrialism and the struggle for profit have had some lamentable side effects. And yet, with all its bemoaned "materialism," through the years America has been almost lavishly generous with those nations overseas who have few qualms about stockpiling food, and who gladly build efficient factories. With all its getting and spending, the United States has managed to win domestic victories over certain diseases, certain cruelties.

Progress always carries a price. Even Thoreau preparing to build his house at Walden Pond had to borrow an ax.

ABIGAIL HAMBLÉN
Newton, Mass.

SIR: I have just finished Mr. Ray Mungo's epic adventure with the polluted world. As a member of the "establishment," I hope any revolution against us is led by the likes of Mr. Mungo. Ugh! Losing an outboard motor because it wasn't lashed down or at least equipped with a line and a float, and losing all their hard-earned chow by neglecting to put it in a waterproof container! With enemies like this, you can almost get along without friends.

I hope when Mr. Mungo leaves this polluted land, he visits someplace like Pakistan, where there are no fine Massachusetts shoes, so people go barefoot, or Nigeria, where people are just going hungry.

Perhaps if the young intellectuals would dedicate themselves more to positive programs for improving our environment without destroying our ability to support our population at a level better than most of the world's, things could be much better.

BURTON B. FAGAN
Arlington, Va.

SIR: If Mr. Mungo is trying to say that he prefers the simple rural life, and/or the pioneer life of an earlier America—that's his privilege.

But it's the man who probably had a good time in agrarian pioneer America, splashing through clear streams, chased by wolves and bears and Indians, trapping furs, stumbling into his own traps and losing a foot, having his woman bring him cider while he harvested a sunbaked field. It's the pioneer woman who did all the hard, dirty labor!

Twelve hours a day, six days a week she spun flax, wove wool, baked that damned bread, jerked meat, hooked pails of water over her shoulders from the clear stream to the dirty cabin, becoming humpbacked in the process, buried half of her children born in natural childbirth, held off Indians with guns that had a kick that laid her out on the floor—forgive me my fondness for a technological society!

IRENE SAYLOR
Harrisburg, Penn.

Oh my, Canada

SIR: Edward Weeks's review of Margaret Laurence's *A Bird in the House* (*March Atlantic*) is very disappointing. I agree with Mr. Weeks in his praise of the book, but I should like to know on what basis he says, "good

writers in Canada have been few and far between." That is a very sweeping statement and, I believe, a grossly uninformed one.

At times it seems unclear whether Mr. Weeks is aware that he is reviewing a Canadian book at all, for more than once he refers to the MacLeod family as "American," though Manitoba is given as their home. Now, he may be trying to impose the terminology of continentalism on a Canadian setting, but if so, the term "North American" should have been used, since "American" usually refers to citizens of the United States. The ambiguity thus created is not cleared up by the statement that in *A Bird in the House* Mrs. Laurence "comes home to the continent and the people she knows best." Why does Mr. Weeks shy away from being more precise?

In my opinion, a Canadian who writes well about what is closest to him and his people is no more parochial than an American who does the same: in each, the particular love may take on general human significance. Besides, I think it can be shown that the international insight and perspective that Mrs. Laurence possesses are more the rule than Mr. Weeks seems to believe. As for subject matter, so for style: I believe that Canadian literary styles, both English and French, can claim a valid place among others and are worthy of respect.

C. ABBOTT CONWAY
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

SIR: One should introduce Mr. Weeks to the works of Frederick Philip Grove, Ernest Buckler, Malcolm Lowry, Morley Callaghan, Henry Kreisel, Robertson Davies, Hugh MacLennan at least, to name only a few Canadian novelists.

D. E. BRADLEY
Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

Mr. Weeks replies:

I have been visiting Canada several times a year ever since the spring of 1927, when, in Toronto, I presented the Atlantic Prize of \$10,000 to Mazo de la Roche for her novel *Jalna*. I have read with sympathy and varied admiration most of the writers Miss Bradley mentions and would add to their number one of the best she does not mention, Roderick Haig-Brown, of Campbell River, British Columbia.

The point with which I con-

cluded in my appreciation of Margaret Laurence is that in her travels and her residence in other lands she has outgrown the parochialism which is still a handicap in Canadian letters. "Her country," I said, "is the country of the heart."

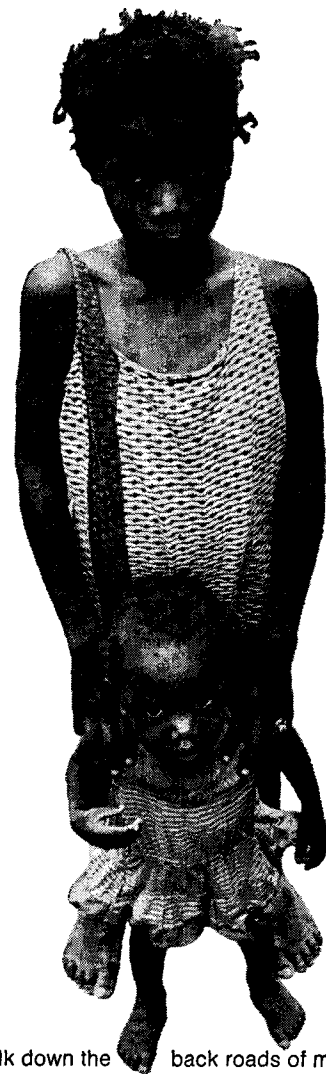
Advice and Consent

SIR: It was with considerable surprise that I found myself maligned in a recent letter to the editor (Irving Plotkin, April issue). The events leading to this public castigation started when I examined the question of insurance company profits (including auto insurance companies) first for the President's Anti-trust Commission and then for the Senate Anti-trust and Monopoly Subcommittee. As an insurance agent for several years I had been ready to accept the insurance-company dogma that profits had always been nonexistent. But concomitantly I saw company assets rise precipitously along with insurance buildings and officers' salaries, while company executives wrung their hands over continued losses.

I discovered that the physical prosperity-mental bankruptcy paradox was associated with accounting, and it was at this stage that I started violating Plotkin's "fundamental principles of accounting." These "fundamental principles," I learned, were that insurance companies kept their books entirely different from all other companies, but when they made comparisons or talked of profits, these differences were completely ignored. Insurance companies had found a miraculous technique for burying billions in profits through a unique system of accounting. Witness the increase in assets over the last ten years of \$20 billion while they showed an accounting underwriting loss of \$1 billion. Mr. Friedman in his *Atlantic* article ("Why Automobile Insurance Rates Keep Going Up," September, 1969) has nicely pointed out how this was done. Mr. Plotkin apparently thinks that I am the rogue responsible for Friedman's conclusions. Naturally, Mr. Plotkin and the insurance industry are terribly chagrined that I had the temerity to question analytically the insurance creed: *IN DAMNIS LUCRA* (in Losses there is Profit).

RICHARD NORGAARD
Head, Finance Department
University of Connecticut

*Give them this day
their daily bread.*



Walk down the back roads of most any Mississippi Delta town and you'll see children with stomachs bloated, eyes dulled, feet swollen, arms and legs matchstick thin. They subsist day after day on a few greens around noon and some pinto beans in the evening. Nothing more. Nothing different. And not even enough of that.

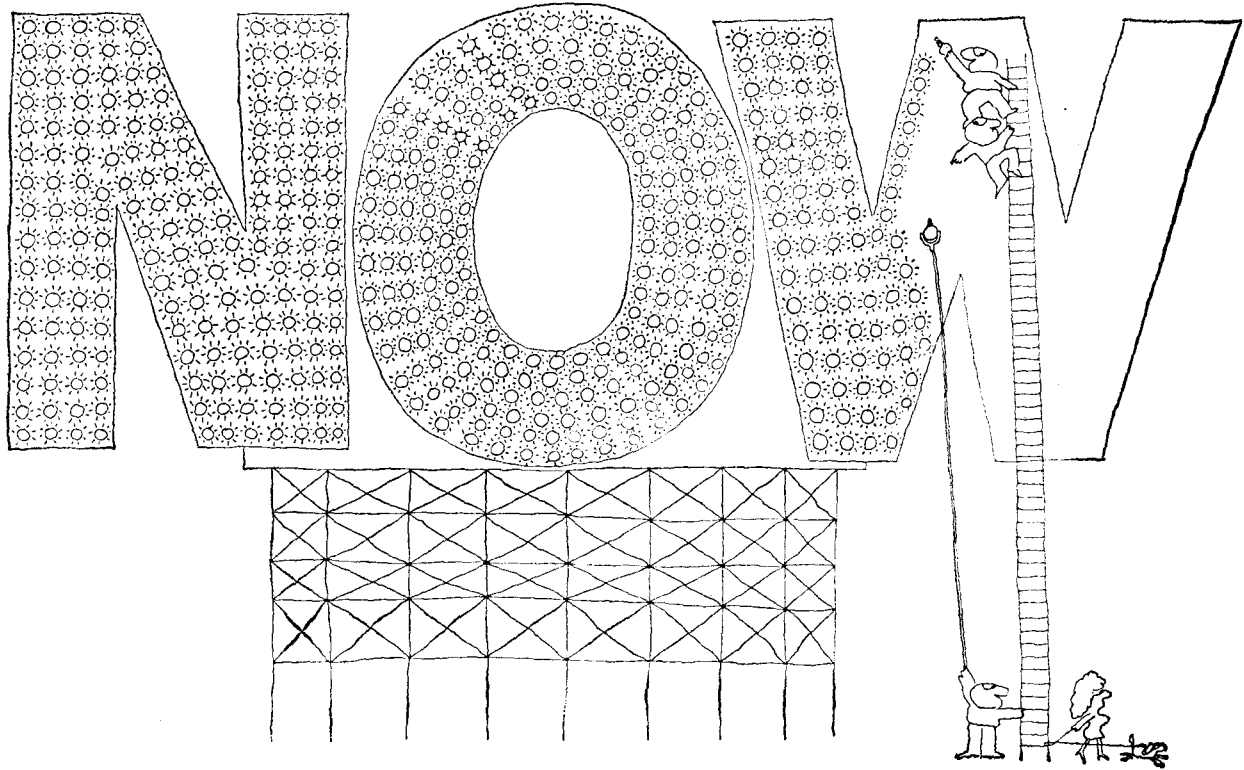
The irony is that they aren't starving at a rate dramatic enough to arouse the indignation of the world. Otherwise something would have already been done.

The NAACP Special Contribution Fund is conducting a nationwide drive to provide Federal Food Stamps for these families. Under this program, a needy family can convert \$10 in Food Stamps into as much as \$240 worth of meat, milk and bread.

To help us in this effort, please send your tax-deductible check to the NAACP Mississippi Emergency Relief Fund.

Thank you.

NAACP MISSISSIPPI EMERGENCY RELIEF FUND,
DEPT. A41, Box 121, RADIO CITY STA., N.Y. 10019



Univac makes now mean now.

Now used to be a sometime thing.

Maddeningly approximate, disturbingly vague. Sometimes no more recent than a quarterly report or a monthly summary.

But things are different today, and better.

Univac has made now into something you can count on and build on.

Our real-time computer systems for business continuously gather, organize,

update and communicate information to any level of management. Only what's needed. Only where needed.

The benefit to you is real-time management. The ability to run your business with up-to-the-minute knowledge of all your operations. Constant information, constant command.

We introduced the real-time concept and put it to work for space and government. We suffered the growing pains

and the debugging, and we proved our technology around the world.

Today we can offer you the management technique of the future.

Call us in. Let us show you what now can mean to you.

UNIVAC SPERRY RAND
FIRST IN REAL-TIME INFORMATION SYSTEMS

LET US NOW APPRAISE FAMOUS WRITERS

by Jessica Mitford

First thing in the morning write down "The." Then follow with another word, then another . . . Such advice and more goes out to the would-be author from the Stratford-on-Avon of correspondence schools. A successful author, self-taught, here tells about the fun and profit, or profit at least, in teaching writing for fun and profit.

Beware of the scribes who like to go about in long robes, and love salutations in the marketplaces . . . and the places of honor at feasts; who devour widows' houses . . .

Luke 20: 46, 47

In recent years I have become aware of fifteen Famous Faces looking me straight in the eye from the pages of innumerable magazines, newspapers, foldout advertisements, sometimes in black and white, sometimes in living color, sometimes posed in a group around a table, sometimes shown singly, pipe in hand in book-lined study or strolling through a woodsy countryside: the Guiding Faculty of the Famous Writers School. They

are Faith Baldwin, John Caples, Bruce Catton, Bennett Cerf, Mignon G. Eberhart, Paul Engle, Bergen Evans, Clifton Fadiman, Rudolf Fleisch, Phyllis McGinley, J. D. Ratcliff, Rod Serling, Max Shulman, Red Smith, Mark Wiseman.

Here is Bennett Cerf, most famous of them all, his kindly, humorous face aglow with sincerity, speaking to us in the first person from a mini-billboard tucked into our Sunday newspaper: "If you want to write, my colleagues and I would like to test your writing aptitude. We'll help you find out whether you can be trained to become a successful writer." And Faith Baldwin, looking up from her typewriter with an expression of ardent concern for that vast, unfulfilled sisterhood of nonwriters: "It's a shame more women don't take up writing. Writing can be an ideal profession for women. . . . Beyond the thrill of that first sale, writing brings intangible rewards." J. D. Ratcliff, billed in the ads as "one of America's highest-paid free-lance authors," thinks it's a shame, too: "I can't understand why more beginners don't take the short road to publication by writing articles for magazines and newspapers. It's a wonderful life."

The short road is attained, the ads imply, via the aptitude test which Bennett Cerf and his colleagues would like you to take so they may grade it "without charge." If you are one of the fortunate ones who do well on the test, you may "enroll for professional

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training." After that, your future is virtually assured, for the ads promise that "Fifteen Famous Writers will teach you to write successfully at home."

These offers are motivated, the ads make clear, by a degree of altruism not often found in those at the top of the ladder. The Fifteen have never forgotten the tough times, the "sheer blood, sweat and rejection slips," as J. D. Ratcliff puts it, through which they suffered as beginning writers; and now they want to extend a helping hand to those still at the bottom rung. "When I look back, I can't help thinking of all the time and agony I would have saved if I could have found a real 'pro' to work with me," says Ratcliff.

How can Bennett Cerf—chairman of the board of Random House, columnist, television personality—and his renowned colleagues find time to grade all the thousands of aptitude tests that must come pouring in, and on top of that fulfill their pledge to "teach you to write successfully at home"? What are the standards for admission to the school? How many graduates actually find their way into the "huge market that will pay well for pieces of almost any length," which, says J. D. Ratcliff, exists for the beginning writer? What are the "secrets of success" that the Famous Fifteen say they have "poured into a set of specially created textbooks"? And how much does it cost to be initiated into these secrets?

My mild curiosity about these matters might never have been satisfied had I not learned, coincidentally, about two candidates for the professional training offered by the Famous Writers who passed the aptitude test with flying colors: a seventy-two-year-old foreign-born widow living on social security, and a fictitious character named Louella Mae Burns.

The adventures of these two impelled me to talk with Bennett Cerf and other members of the Guiding Faculty, to interview former students, to examine the "set of specially created textbooks" (and the annual stockholders' reports, which proved in some ways more instructive), and eventually to visit the school's headquarters in Westport, Connecticut.

An Oakland lawyer told me about the seventy-two-year-old widow. She had come to him in some distress; a salesman had charmed his way into her home and at the end of his sales pitch had relieved her of \$200 (her entire bank account) as a down payment on a \$900 contract, the balance of which would be paid off in monthly installments. A familiar story, for like all urban communities ours is fertile ground for roving commission salesmen skilled in unloading on the unwary housewife anything

from vacuum cleaners to deep freezers to encyclopedias to grave plots, at vastly inflated prices. The unusual aspect of this old lady's tale was the merchandise she had been sold. No sooner had the salesman left than she thought better of it, and when the lessons arrived, she returned them unopened.

To her pleas to be released from the contract, the Famous Writers replied: "Please understand that you are involved in a legal and binding contract," and added that the school's policy requires a doctor's certificate attesting to ill health before a student is permitted to withdraw.

There was a short, sharp struggle. The lawyer wrote an angry letter to the school demanding prompt return of the \$200 "fraudulently taken" from the widow, and got an equally stiff refusal in reply. He then asked the old lady to write out in her own words a description of the salesman's visit. She produced a garbled, semiliterate account, which he forwarded to the school with the comment: "This is the lady whom your salesman found to be 'very qualified' to take your writing course. I wonder if Mr. Cerf is aware of the cruel deceptions to which he lends his name?" At the bottom of his letter, the lawyer wrote the magic words, "Carbon copies to Bennett Cerf and to Consumer Frauds Division, office of the Attorney-General." Presto! The school suddenly caved in and returned the money in full to the widow.

Louella Mae Burns, the other successful candidate, is the brainchild of Robert Byrne and his wife. I met her in the pages of Byrne's informative and often hilarious book *Writing Rackets* (Lyle Stuart, 1969, \$4.00), which examines the lures held out to would-be writers by high-priced correspondence schools, phony agents who demand a fee for reading manuscripts, the "vanity" presses that will publish your book for a price.

Mrs. Byrne set out to discover at how low a level of talent one might be accepted as a candidate for "professional training" by the Famous Writers. Assuming the personality of a sixty-three-year-old widow of little education, she tackled the aptitude test.

The crux of the test is the essay, in which the applicant is invited to "tell of an experience you have had at some time in your life." Here, Louella Mae outdid herself: "I think I can truthfully say to the best of my knowledge that the following is truly the most arresting experience I have ever undergone. My husband, Fred, and I, had only been married but a short time . . ." Continuing in this vein, she describes "one beautiful cloudless day in springtime" and "a flock of people who started merging along the sidewalk. . . . When out of the blue came a honking and cars and motorcycles and policemen. It was really something! Everybody started shouting and waving and we finally essayed to see the reason of all this. In a sleek black limousine we saw real close Mr. Calvin Coolidge, the President Himself!

Last in these pages with an excerpt from her book *The Trial of Dr. Spock*, English-born Jessica Mitford lives in San Francisco with her lawyer husband. She also wrote *The American Way of Death*, a best-selling exposé of the burial business.

It was truly an unforgettable experience and one which I shall surely long remember."

This effort drew a two-and-a-half-page type-written letter from Donald T. Clark, registrar of Famous Writers School, which read in part: "Dear Mrs. Burns, Congratulations! The enclosed Test unquestionably qualifies you for enrollment . . . only a fraction of our students receive higher grades. . . . In our opinion, you have a basic writing aptitude which justifies professional training." And the clincher: "You couldn't consider breaking into writing at a better time than today. Everything indicates that the demand for good prose is growing much faster than the supply of trained talent. Just consider how a single article can cause a magazine's newsstand sales to soar; how a novel can bring hundreds of thousands in movie rights . . ."

There is something spooky about this exchange, for I later found out that letters to successful applicants are written not by a "registrar," but by copywriters in the Madison Avenue office of the school's advertising department—Donald T. Clark's ghost-writer in earnest correspondence with ghost Louella Mae Burns.

Perhaps these two applicants are not typical of the student body. What of students who show genuine promise, those capable of "mastering the basic skills" and achieving a level of professional competence? Will they, as the school suggests, find their way into "glamorous careers" and be "launched on a secure future" as writers?

Robert Byrne gives a gloomy account of the true state of the market for "good prose" and "trained talent." He says that of all lines of work, free-lance writing is one of the most precarious and worst paid (as who should know better than Bennett Cerf & Co.). He cites a survey of the country's twenty-six top magazines: of 79,812 unsolicited-article manuscripts, fewer than a thousand were accepted. Unsolicited fiction manuscripts fared far worse. Of 182,505 submitted, only 560 were accepted. Furthermore, a study based on the earnings of established writers, members of the Authors League with published books to their credit, shows that the average free-lance earns just over \$3000 a year, an income which, Byrne points out, "very nearly qualifies him for emergency welfare assistance."

What have the Famous Fifteen to say for themselves about all of this? Precious little, it turns out. Most of those with whom I spoke were quick to disavow any responsibility for the school's day-to-day operating methods and were unable to answer the most rudimentary questions: qualifications for admission, teacher-student ratio, cost of the course. They seemed astonished, even pained to think people might be naïve enough to take the advertising at face value.

"If anyone thinks we've got time to look at the

aptitude tests that come in, they're out of their mind!" said Bennett Cerf. And Phyllis McGinley: "I'm only a figurehead. I thought a person had to be qualified to take the course, but since I never see any of the applications or the lessons, I don't know. Of course, somebody with a real gift for writing wouldn't have to be taught to write."

One of the FWS brochures says, "On a short story or novel you have at hand the professional counsel of Faith Baldwin . . . all these eminent authors in effect are looking over your shoulder as you learn." Doesn't that mean in plain English, I asked Miss Baldwin, that she will personally counsel students? "Oh, that's just one of those things about advertising . . ." she replied. "Anyone with common sense would know that the fifteen of us are much too busy to read the manuscripts the students send in."

Famous Writer Mark Wiseman, himself an ad-man, explained the alluring promises of "financial success and independence," the "secure future as a writer" held out in the school's advertising. "That's just a fault of our civilization," he said. "You have to overpersuade people, make it all look optimistic, not mention obstacles and hurdles." Why does the school send out fleets of salesmen instead of handling all applications by mail? "If we didn't have salesmen, not nearly as many sales would be made. It's impossible, you see, to explain it all by mail, or answer questions people may have about the course." (That is to say, the school that claims to be able to impart the techniques requisite to becoming a best-selling author by mail, cannot explain the details of its course to prospects and answer their questions in the same fashion; but perhaps that is just another fault of our civilization.)

Professor Paul Engle, a poet who directed the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa, is the only professional educator among the fifteen. But like the others he pleads ignorance of the basics. The school's admissions policy, its teaching methods and selling techniques are a closed book to him. "I'm the least informed of all people," he said. "I only go there once in a great while. There's a distinction between the *guiding* faculty, which doesn't do very much, and the *teaching* faculty, which actually works with the students—who've spent really quite a lot of money on the course!" Professor Engle has met only once with the Guiding Faculty, to pose for a publicity photograph: "It was no meeting in the sense of gathering for the exchange of useful ideas. But I think the school is not so much interested in the work done by the guiding faculty as in the prestige of the names. When Bennett Cerf was on *What's My Line?* his name was a household word!"

How did professor Engle become a member of the Guiding Faculty in the first place? "That fascinated me!" he said. "I got a letter from a man named Gordon Carroll, asking me to come to Westport the next time I was in New York. So I did go and



Seated, l to r: W. Shakespeare, O. Wilde, S. Johnson, G. Stein, F. Arouet (Voltaire), E. Hemingway. Standing, l to r: S. Clemens (M. Twain), L. Tolstoy, E. Poe, D. Thomas. Absent at time of portrait: F. Dostoevsky, W. Faulkner, L. M. Alcott, J. Goethe, J. Kilmer.

see him. He asked me if I would join the Guiding Faculty. I said, 'What do I guide?' We talked awhile, and I said, well, it seems all right, so I signed on." How could it come about that the Oakland widow and Louella Mae Burns were judged "highly qualified" to enroll? "I'm not trying to weasel out, or evade your questions, but I'm so very far away from all that."

Bennett Cerf received me most cordially in his wonderfully posh office at Random House. Each of us was (I think, in retrospect) bent on putting the other thoroughly at ease. "May I call you Jessica?" he said at one point. "I don't see why not, *Mortuary Management* always does." We had a good laugh over that.

He told me that the school was first organized in the late fifties (it opened for business in February, 1961) as an offshoot of the immensely profitable Famous Artists correspondence school, after which it was closely modeled. Prime movers in recruiting Famous Writers for the Guiding Faculty were the late Albert Dorne, an illustrator and president of Famous Artists, Gordon Carroll, sometime editor of *Coronet* and *Reader's Digest*, and Mr. Cerf. "We approached representative writers, the best we could get in each field: fiction, advertising, sports writing, television. The idea was to give the school some prestige."

Like his colleagues on the Guiding Faculty, Mr. Cerf does no teaching, takes no hand in recruiting

instructors or establishing standards for the teaching program, does not pass on advertising copy except that which purports to quote him, does not supervise the school's business practices: "I know *nothing* about the business and selling end and I care *less*. I've nothing to do with how the school is run; I can't put that too strongly to you. But it's been run extremely cleanly. I mean that from my heart, Jessica." What, then, is his guiding role? "I go up there once or twice a year to talk to the staff." The Guiding Faculty, he said, helped to write the original textbooks. His own contribution to these was a section on how to prepare a manuscript for publication: "I spent about a week talking into a tape machine about how a manuscript is turned into a book—practical advice about double-spacing the typescript, how it is turned into galleys, through every stage until publication." How many books by FWS students has Random House published? "Oh, come on, you must be pulling my leg—no person of any sophistication, whose book we'd publish, would have to take a mail-order course to learn how to write."

However, the school does serve an extremely valuable purpose, he said, in teaching history professors, chemistry professors, lawyers, and businessmen to write intelligibly. I was curious to know why a professor would take a correspondence course in preference to writing classes available in the English department of his own university—who are all these professors? Mr. Cerf said he did not know their names, or at which colleges they were presently teaching.

While Mr. Cerf is by no means uncritical of some aspects of mail-order selling, he philosophically accepts them as inevitable in the cold-blooded world of big business—so different, one gathers, from his own cultured world of letters. "I think mail-order selling has several built-in deficiencies," he said. "The crux of it is a very hard sales pitch, an appeal to the gullible. Of course, once somebody has signed a contract with Famous Writers he can't get out of it, but that's true with every business in the country." Noticing that I was writing this down, he said in alarm, "For God's sake, don't quote me on that 'gullible' business—you'll have all the mail-order houses in the country down on my neck!" "Then would you like to paraphrase it?" I asked, suddenly getting very firm. "Well—you could say in general I don't like the hard sell, yet it's the basis of all American business." "Sorry, I don't call that a paraphrase, I shall have to use both of them," I said, in a positively governessy tone of voice. "Anyway, why do you lend your name to this hard-sell proposition?" Bennett Cerf (with his melting grin): "Frankly, if you must know, I'm an awful ham—I love to see my name in the papers!"

On the delicate question of their compensation, the Famous ones are understandably reticent. "That's a private matter," Bennett Cerf said, "but

it's quite generous, and we were given stock in the company, which has enhanced a great deal." I asked Phyllis McGinley about a report in *Business Week* some years ago that in addition to their substantial stock holdings each member of the Guiding Faculty receives 1.6 percent of the school's annual gross revenue, which then amounted to \$4400 apiece. "Oh?—Well, I may have a price on my soul, but it's not *that* low; we get a lot more than that!" she answered gaily.

With one accord the Famous Writers urged me to seek answers to questions about advertising policy, enrollment figures, costs, and the like from the director of the school, Mr. John Lawrence, former president of William Morrow publishing company. Mr. Lawrence invited me to Westport so that I could see the school in operation and meet Mr. Gordon Carroll, who is now serving as director of International Famous Writers Schools.

The Famous Schools are housed in a row of boxlike buildings at the edge of Westport ("It's Westport's leading industry," a former resident told me), which look from the outside like a small modern factory. Inside, everything reflects expansion and progress. The spacious reception rooms are decorated with the works of Famous Artists, the parent school, and Famous Photographers, organized in 1964.

The success story, and something of the *modus operandi*, can be read at a glance in the annual shareholders' reports and the daily stockmarket quotations (the schools have gone public and are now listed on the New York Stock Exchange as FAS).

Tuition revenue for the schools zoomed from \$7 million in 1960 to \$48 million in 1969. During this period the price per share of common stock rose from \$5 to \$40 (it has fallen sharply, however, in recent months).

The Schools' interest in selling as compared with teaching is reflected more accurately in the corporate balance sheets than in the brochures sent to prospective students. In 1966 (the last time this revealing breakdown was given), when total tuition revenue was \$28 million, \$10.8 million was spent on "advertising and selling" compared with \$4.8 million on "cost of grading and materials."

The Famous Schools have picked up many another property along the way: they now own the Evelyn Wood Reading Dynamics Welcome Wagon, International Accountants Society (also a correspondence school), Linguaphone Institute, Computer College Selection Service. Their empire extends to Japan, Australia, Sweden, France, Germany, Switzerland, Austria. An invasion of Great Britain¹ is planned (the report warns) as soon as

the English prove themselves worthy of it by stabilizing their currency situation. In the "market-testing stage" are plans for a Famous Musicians School, Business Courses for Women, a Writing for Young Readers Course.

Summarizing these accomplishments, the shareholders' report states: "We are in the vanguard of education throughout the world, the acknowledged leader in independent study and an innovator in all types of learning. We will continue to think boldly, to act with wisdom and daring, to be simultaneously visionary and effective." The schools mindful of "the deepening of the worldwide crisis in education" are casting predatory looks in the direction of "the total educational establishment, both academic and industrial." The shareholders' report observes sententiously, "As grave times produce great men to cope with them, so do they produce great ideas."

From Messrs. Lawrence and Carroll I learned these salient facts about Famous Writers School:

The cost of the course (never mentioned in the advertising, nor in the letters to successful applicants, and revealed only by the salesman at the point where the prospect is ready to sign the contract): \$785, if the student makes a onetime payment. But only about 10 percent pay in a lump sum. The cost to the 90 percent who make time payments, including interest, is about \$900, or roughly twenty times the cost of extension and correspondence courses offered by universities.

Current enrollment is 65,000, of which three quarters are enrolled in the fiction course, the balance in nonfiction, advertising, business writing. Teaching faculty: 55, or 1181 $\frac{1}{2}$ students per instructor. Almost 2000 veterans are taking the course at the taxpayer's expense through the GI Bill.

There are 800 salesmen deployed throughout the country (14 $\frac{3}{5}$ salesmen to every instructor), working on a straight commission basis. I asked about the salesmen's kits: might I have one? "You'd need a dray horse to carry it!" Mr. Carroll assured me. He added that they are currently experimenting with a movie of the school, prepared by Famous Writer Rod Serling, to show in prospects' homes.

I was surprised to learn that despite the school's accreditation by such public agencies as the Veterans Administration and the National Home Study Council, it preserves considerable secrecy about some sectors of its operation. Included in the "confidential" category, which school personnel told me could not be divulged, are:

The amount of commission paid to salesmen.

Breakdown of the "sales and advertising" item in the shareholders' report as between sales commissions and advertising budget.

Breakdown of the income from tuition fees as between Writers, Artists, Photographers.

Terms of the school's contract with Guiding Faculty members.

¹ FAS announced in May that it had acquired Sir Isaac Pitman & Sons Ltd., London.

If Bennett Cerf and his colleagues haven't time to grade the aptitude tests, who has? Their stand-ins are two full-timers and some forty pieceworkers, mostly housewives, who "help you find out whether you can be trained to become a successful writer" in the privacy of their homes. They grade the tests at the rate of one every ten minutes. There are no standards for admission to FWS, one of the full-timers explained. "It's not the same thing as a grade on a college theme. The test is designed to indicate your *potential* as a writer, not your present ability." Only about 10 percent of the applicants are advised they lack this "potential," and are rejected.

The instructors guide the students from cheerful little cubicles equipped with machines into which they dictate the "two-page letter of criticism and advice" promised in the advertising. They are, Gordon Carroll told me, former free-lance writers and people with editorial background: "We never hire professional teachers, they're too *dull!* Ph.D.'s are the worst of all!" (Conversely, a trained teacher accustomed to all that the classroom offers might find an unrelieved diet of FWS students' manuscripts somewhat monotonous.) The starting salary for instructors is \$8500 a year, falling a bit short of the affluent and glamorous life dangled before their students in the school's advertising.

As I watched the instructors at work, I detected a generous inclination to accentuate the positive in the material submitted. Given an assignment to describe a period in time, a student had chosen 1933. Her first paragraph, about the election of FDR and the economic situation in the country, could have been copied out of any almanac. She had followed this with "There were breadlines everywhere." I watched the instructor underline the breadlines in red, and write in the margin: "Good work, Mrs. Smith! It's a pleasure working with you. You have recaptured the atmosphere of those days."

Although the key to the school's financial success is its huge dropout rate ("We couldn't make any money if all the students finished," Famous Writer Phyllis McGinley had told me in her candid fashion), the precise percentage of dropouts is hard to come by. "I don't know exactly what it is, or where to get the figures," said Mr. Lawrence. "The last time we analyzed it, it related to the national figure for high school and college dropouts; let's say about two thirds of the enrollments."

However, according to my arithmetic, based on figures furnished by the school, the dropout rate must be closer to 90 percent. Each student is supposed to send in twenty-four assignments over a three-year period, an average of eight a year. With 65,000 enrolled, this would amount to more than half a million lessons a year, and the fifty-five instructors would have to race along correcting these at a clip of one every few minutes. But in fact (the instructors assured me), they spend an hour or more on each lesson, and grade a total of only about

50,000 a year. What happens to the other 470,000 lessons? "That's baffling," said Mr. Carroll. "I guess you can take a horse to the water, but you can't make him drink."

These balky nags are, however, legally bound by the contract whether or not they ever crack a textbook or send in an assignment. What happens to the defaulter who refuses to pay? Are many taken to court? "None," said Mr. Lawrence. "It's against our policy to sue in court." Why, if the school considers the contract legally binding? "Well—there's a question of morality involved. You'd hardly take a person to court for failing to complete a correspondence course."

Mrs. Virginia Knauer, the President's special assistant for consumer affairs, with whom I discussed this later, suspects there is another question involved. "The Famous Writers would never win in court," she said indignantly. "A lawsuit would expose them—somebody should take *them* to court. Their advertising is reprehensible, it's very close to being misleading." Needless to say the debtors are not informed of the school's moral scruples against lawsuits. On the contrary, a Finnish immigrant, whose husband complained to Mrs. Knauer that although she speaks little English she had been coerced into signing for the course by an importunate salesman, was bombarded with dunning letters and telegrams full of implied threats to sue.

A fanciful idea occurred to me: since the school avers that it does not sue delinquents, I could make a fortune by advertising in the literary monthlies: "For \$10 I will tell you how to take the Famous Writers course for nothing." To those who sent in their \$10, I would return a postcard saying merely, "Enroll in the course and make no payments." I tried this out on Mr. Carroll, and subsequently on Bennett Cerf. Their reactions were identical. "You'd find yourself behind bars if you did that!" "Why? Whom would I have defrauded?" A question they were unable to answer, although Bennett Cerf, in mock horror, declared that the inventive mail-order industry would certainly find *some* legal means to frustrate my iniquitous plan.

Both Mr. Lawrence and Mr. Carroll were unhappy about the case of the seventy-two-year-old widow when I told them about it—it had not previously come to their attention. It was an unfortunate and unusual occurrence, they assured me, one of those slipups that may happen from time to time in any large corporation.

On the whole, they said, FWS salesmen are very carefully screened; only one applicant in ten is accepted. They receive a rigorous training in ethical salesmanship, every effort is made to see that they do not "oversell" the course or stray from the truth in their home presentation.

Eventually I had the opportunity to observe a

presentation in the home of a neighbor who conjured up a salesman for me by sending in the aptitude test. A few days later she got a printed form letter (undated) saying that a field representative of the school would be in the area next week for a very short while and asking her to specify a convenient time when he might telephone for an appointment. There was something a little fuzzy around the edges here—for she had not yet heard from the school about the results of her test—but she let that pass.

The “field representative” (like the cemetery industry, the Famous Writers avoid the term “salesman”) when he arrived had a ready explanation: The school had telephoned to notify him that my neighbor had passed the test, and to tell him that luckily for her there were “a few openings still left in this enrollment period”—it might be months before this opportunity would come again!

The fantasy he spun for us, which far outstripped anything in the advertising, would have done credit to the school's fiction course.

Pressed for facts and figures, he told us that two or three of the Famous Fifteen are in Westport at all times working with a staff of forty or fifty experts in their specialty, evaluating and correcting student manuscripts. . . . Your Guiding Faculty member, could be Bennett Cerf, could be Rod Serling depending on your subject, will review at least one of your manuscripts and may suggest a publisher for it . . . there are 300 instructors

for 3000 students [“You mean, one teacher for every ten students?” I asked. “That's correct, it's a ratio unexcelled by any college in the country,” said the field representative without batting an eye] . . . hundreds of university professors are currently enrolled . . . 75 percent of the students publish in their first year, and the majority more than pay for the course through their sales . . . there are very few dropouts because only serious, qualified applicants (like my neighbor) are permitted to enroll. . . .

During his two-hour discourse he casually mentioned three books recently published by students he personally enrolled; one is already being made into a movie! “Do tell us the names, so we can order them?” But he couldn't remember, offhand: “I get so darn many announcements of books published by our students.”

The course itself is packaged for maximum eye appeal in four hefty “two-toned, buckram bound” volumes with matching loose-leaf binders for the lessons. The textbooks contain all sorts of curious and disconnected matter: examples of advertisements that “pull,” right and wrong ways of ending business letters, paragraphs from the *Saturday Evening Post*, *This Week*, *Reader's Digest*, quotations from successful writers like William Shakespeare, Faith Baldwin, Mark Twain, Mark Wiseman, Winston Churchill, Red Smith, an elementary grammar lesson (“*Verbs* are action words. A *noun* is the name of a person, place or thing”), a glossary

Object Lesson

“Every writer worth his salt develops, after a time, his own style.”
—Faith Baldwin, *Principles of Good Writing*, FWS textbook.

But famous writers write alike:

If you want to write, my colleagues and I would like to test your writing aptitude. We'll help you find out if you can be trained to become a successful writer. We know that many men and women who could become writers—and *should* become writers—never do. Some are uncertain of their talent and have no reliable way of finding out if it's worth developing. Others simply can't get topnotch professional training without leaving their homes or giving up their jobs.

by Faith Baldwin

If you want to write and see your work published, my colleagues and I would like to test your writing aptitude. We'll help you find out whether you can be trained to become a successful writer.

We know that many men and women who could become writers—and *should* become writers—never do. Some are uncertain of their talent and have no reliable way of finding out if it's worth developing. Others simply can't get topnotch professional training without leaving their homes or giving up their jobs.

by Bennett Cerf

(Reprinted from postcard inserts currently being circulated in millions of paperback books.)

of commonly misspelled words, a standard list of printer's proof-marking symbols.

There is many a homespun suggestion for the would-be Famous Writer on what to write about, how to start writing: "Writing ideas—ready-made aids for the writer—are available everywhere. In every waking hour you hear and see and feel. . . ." "How do you get started on a piece of writing? One successful author writes down the word 'The' the moment he gets to the typewriter in the morning. He follows 'The' with another word, then another. . . ." (But the text writer, ignoring his own good advice, starts a sentence with "As," and tangles himself in an unparsable sentence: "As with so many professional writers, Marjorie Holmes keeps a notebook handy. . . .")

Throughout the course the illusion is fostered that the student is, or soon will be, writing for publication: "Suppose you're sitting in the office of a magazine editor discussing an assignment for next month's issue." The set of books includes a volume entitled *How to Turn Your Writing into Dollars*, which winds up on a triumphal note with a sample publisher's contract and a sample agreement with a Hollywood agent.

In short, there is really nothing useful in these books that could not be found in any number of writing and style manuals, grammar texts, marketing guides, free for the asking in the public library. (Or, for under \$20 a writer can assemble his own textbook library. Everyone has his preferences; among my own favorites, sources of endless pleasure and instruction, are Fowler's *Modern English Usage*; *The Art of Writing* by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch; *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk, Jr., and E. B. White; Roget's *Thesaurus*; Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*.)

Thrown in as part of the \$785–\$900 course is a "free" subscription to *Famous Writers* magazine, a quarterly in which stories written by students appear under this hyperbolic caption: "Writers Worth Watching: In this section, magazine editors and book publishers can appraise the quality of work being done by FWS students." According to the school's literature, "each issue of the magazine is received and read by some 2,000 editors, publishers and other key figures in the writing world." However, Messrs. Carroll and Lawrence were unable to enlighten me about these key figures—who they are, how it is known that they read each issue, whether they have ever bought manuscripts from students after appraising the quality of their work.

The student sales department of the magazine is also worth watching. Presumably the school puts its best foot forward here, yet the total of all success stories recorded therein each year is only about thirty-five, heavily weighted in the direction of

small denominational magazines, local newspapers, pet-lovers' journals, and the like. Once in a while a student strikes it rich with a sale to *Reader's Digest*, *Redbook*, *McCall's*, generally in "discovery" departments of these magazines that specifically solicit first-person anecdotes from their readers as distinct from professional writers: Most Unforgettable Character, Turning Point, Suddenly it Happens to You.

The school gets enormous mileage out of these few student sales. The same old successful students turn up time and again in the promotional literature. Thus an ad in the January 4, 1970, issue of the *New York Times Magazine* features seven testimonials: "I've just received a big, beautiful check from the Reader's Digest . . ." "I've just received good news and a check from Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine . . ." "Recently, I've sold three more articles . . ." How recently? Checking back through old copies of *Famous Writers* magazine, I found the latest of these success stories had appeared in the student sales department of a 1968 issue; the rest had been lifted from issues of 1964 and 1965.

As for the quality of individual instruction, the reactions of several former FWS students with whom I spoke were varied. Only one, a "success story" lady featured in FWS advertising who has published four juvenile books, expressed unqualified enthusiasm. Two other successes of yesteryear, featured in the school's 1970 ad, said they had never finished the course and had published nothing since 1965.

An FWS graduate who had completed the entire course (and has not, to date, sold any of her stories) echoed the views of many: "It's tremendously overblown, there's a lot of busy work, unnecessary padding to make you think you're getting your money's worth. One peculiar thing is you get a different instructor for each assignment, so there's not much of the 'personal attention' promised in the brochures." However, she added, "I have to be fair. It did get me started, and it did make me keep writing."

The staggering dropout rate cannot, I was soon convinced, be laid entirely at the door of rapacious salesmen who sign up semiliterates and other incompetents. Many of those who told me of their experience with the school are articulate, intelligent people, manifestly capable of disciplined self-study that could help them to improve their prose style. Why should adults of sound mind and resolute purpose first enroll in FWS and then throw away their substantial investment? One letter goes far to explain:

"My husband and I bought the course for two main reasons. The first was that we were in the boondocks of Arkansas and we truly felt that the Famous Writers School under the sponsorship of

Bennett Cerf etc. was new in concept and would have more to offer than other courses we had seen advertised. The second was the fact that we had a definite project in mind: a fictionalized account of our experiences in the American labor movement.

"I guess the worst part of our experience was the realization that the school could not live up to its advertised promise. It is in the area of the assignments and criticism that the course falls down. Because you get a different instructor each time, there is no continuity. This results in the student failing to get any understanding of story and structure from the very beginning.

"My husband completed about eight assignments, but felt so intensely frustrated with the course that he could not go on. He couldn't get any satisfaction from the criticism.

"While the school is careful to advise that no one can teach writing talent, they constantly encourage their students toward a belief in a market that doesn't exist for beginning writers. For us, it was an expensive and disappointing experience."

Another frequently voiced criticism: "The school attempts to indoctrinate its students with a universally palatable style geared strictly to the closest farm and garden market. They don't expect, or accept, experimental work. Forty years ago the sort of bland writing they encourage might have found a home in the mass circulation family magazines—I doubt if it would today."

I showed to an English professor some corrected lessons that fell into my hands. One assignment: "to inject new life and color and dimension into a simple declarative sentence." From the sentence "The cat washed its paws," the student had fashioned this: "With fastidious fussiness, the cat flicked his pink tongue over his paws, laying the fur down neatly and symmetrically." The instructor had crossed out "cat" and substituted "the burly gray tomcat." With fastidious fussiness, the lanky tweed-suited English professor clutched at his balding, pink pate and emitted a low, agonized groan of bleak and undisguised despair: "Exactly the sort of wordy stuff we try to get students to *avoid*."

The phenomenal success of FWS in attracting students (if not in holding them) does point to an undeniable yearning on the part of large numbers of people not only to see their work published, but also for the sort of self-improvement the school purports to offer. As Robert Byrne points out, what can be learned about writing from a writing course can be of great value in many areas of life "from love letters to suicide notes." For shut-ins, people living in remote rural areas, and others unable to get classroom instruction, correspondence courses may provide the only opportunity for supervised study.

Recognizing the need, some fifteen state universi-

ties offer correspondence courses that seem to me superior to the Famous Writers course for a fraction of the cost. True, the universities neither package nor push their courses, they provide no handsome buckram-bound two-tone loose-leaf binders, no matching textbooks, no sample Hollywood contract.

Unobtrusively tucked away in the Lifelong Learning bulletin of the University of California Extension at Berkeley are two such offerings: magazine-article writing, 18 assignments, fee \$55, and short-story theory and practice, 15 assignments, fee \$35 (\$5 more for out-of-state enrollees). There are no academic requirements for these courses; anybody can enroll. No danger here of the Oakland widow or Louella Mae Burns getting sucked in, for those who in the instructor's opinion prove to be unqualified are advised to switch to an elementary course in grammar and composition.

Cecilia Bartholomew, who has taught the short-story course by correspondence for the past twelve years, is herself the author of two novels and numerous short stories. She cringes at the thought of drumming up business for the course: "I'd be a terrible double-dealer to try to *sell* people on it," she said. Like the Famous Writers instructors, Mrs. Bartholomew sends her students a lengthy criticism of each assignment, but unlike them she does not cast herself in the role of editor revising stories for publication: "It's the improvement in their writing technique that's important. The aim of my course is to develop in each student a professional standard of writing. I'll tell him when a piece is good enough to submit to an editor, but I'll never tell him it will sell." Have any of her students sold their pieces? "Yes, quite a few. Some have published in volumes of juvenile stories, some in Hitchcock Mysteries. But we don't stress this at all."

In contrast, Louise Boggess, who teaches magazine-article writing by correspondence in addition to her classes in "professional writing" at the College of San Mateo, exudes go-ahead salesmanship: she believes that most of her students will eventually find a market for their work. The author of several how-to-do-it books (among them *Writing Articles that Sell*, which she uses as the text for her course), she points her students straight toward the mass writing market. In her streamlined, practical lessons the emphasis is unabashedly on formula writing that will sell. Her very first assignment is how to write a "hook," meaning an arresting opening sentence. What does she think of the word "The" for an opener? It doesn't exactly grab her, she admitted.

During the eighteen months she has been teaching the correspondence course, several of her 102 students have already sold pieces to such magazines as *Pageant*, *Parents'*, *Lady's Circle*, *Family Weekly*; she has had about six drop-outs, an enviable record by FWS standards.

My brief excursion into correspondence-school-

land taught me little, after all, that the canny consumer does not already know about the difference between buying and being sold. As Faith Baldwin said, most advertising is sometimes misleading; as Bennett Cerf said, the crux of mail-order selling is a hard pitch to the gullible. We know that the commission salesman will, if we let him into our homes, dazzle and bemuse us with the beauty, durability, unexcelled value of his product, whatever it is.

As for the tens of thousands who sign up with FWS when they could get a better and cheaper correspondence course through the universities (or, if they live in a city, adult-education extension courses), we know from reading Vance Packard that people tend to prefer things that come in fancy packages and cost more.

There is probably nothing illegal in the FWS operation, although the consumer watchdogs have their eye on it.

Robert Hughes, counsel for the Federal Trade Commission's Bureau of Deceptive Practices, told me he has received a number of complaints about the school, mostly relating to the high-pressure and misleading sales pitch. "The real evil is in the solicitation and enrollment procedures," he said. "There's a basic contradiction involved when you have profit-making organizations in the field of education. There's pressure to maximize the number of enrollments to make more profit. Surgery is needed in the enrollment procedure."

There is also something askew with the cast of characters in the foregoing drama which would no doubt be quickly spotted by FWS instructors in television-script writing ("where the greatest market lies for the beginning writer," as the school tells us).

I can visualize the helpful comment on my paper: "Good work, Miss Mitford. The Oakland widow's problem was well thought through. But characterization is weak. You could have made your script more believable had you chosen a group of shift-eyed hucksters out to make a buck, one step ahead of the sheriff, instead of these fifteen eminently successful and solidly respectable writers, who are well liked and admired by the American viewing public. For pointers on how to make your characters come to life in a way we can all identify with, I suggest you study Rod Serling's script *The Twilight Zone* in the kit you received from us. Your grade is D-. It has been a pleasure working with you. Good luck!"

King of the River

If the water were clear enough,
if the water were still,
but the water is not clear,
the water is not still,
you would see yourself,
slipped out of your skin,
nosing upstream,
slapping, thrashing,
tumbling
over the rocks
till you paint them
with your belly's blood:
Finned Ego,
yard of muscle that coils,
uncoils.

If the knowledge were given you,
but it is not given,
for the membrane is clouded
with self-deceptions
and the iridescent image swims
through a mirror that flows,
you would surprise yourself
in that other flesh
heavy with milt,
bruised, battering towards the dam
that lips the orgiastic pool.

*Come. Bathe in these waters.
Increase and die.*

If the power were granted you
to break out of your cells,
but the imagination fails
and the doors of the senses close
on the child within,
you would dare to be changed,
as you are changing now,
into the shape you dread
beyond the merely human.
A dry fire eats you.
Fat drips from your bones.
The flutes of your gills discolor.
You have become a ship for parasites.
The great clock of your life
is slowing down,
and the small clocks run wild.
For this you were born.
You have cried to the wind
and heard the wind's reply:
"I did not choose the way,
the way chose me."
You have tasted the fire on your tongue
till it is swollen black
with a prophetic joy:
"Burn with me!
The only music is time,
the only dance is love."

If the heart were pure enough,
but it is not pure,
you would admit
that nothing compels you
anymore, nothing
at all abides,
but nostalgia and desire,
the two-way ladder
between heaven and hell.
On the threshold
of the last mystery,
at the brute absolute hour,
you have looked into the eyes
of your creature self,
which are glazed with madness,
and you say
he is not broken but endures,
limber and firm
in the state of his shining,
forever inheriting his salt kingdom,
from which he is banished
forever.

by Stanley Kunitz

THE RECRUITING OFFICER

A story by John McGahern

Two cars outside the low concrete wall of Arigna School, small and blue-slatted between the coal mountains, rust of iron on the rocks of the trout stream than ran past the playground, the chant of children coming through the open windows into the rain-cleaned air, it was this lured me back into the schoolroom of this day—to watch my manager, Canon Reilly, thrash the boy Walshe, and wait for the recruiting officer to come—but if these didn't happen, some other would, and deeper reason than the quiet picture of the school between mountains in bringing me back is what amounts to a paralysis when given choices, a feeling that any one thing in this life is almost as worth doing as any other.

I had got out of the Christian Brothers, I no longer wore the black clothes and white half-collar, and was no longer surrounded by the rules of the order in its monastery, but then after the first freedom I was afraid. I was alone.

I had come to visit one of my married sisters when I saw the quiet school. I said I too would live out my life in the obscurity of these small places, if I was lucky I'd find a young girl; to grow old with her among a people seemed ambition enough; there might even be children and fields and garden.

I got a school immediately, without trouble; the newly trained teachers wanted places in the university towns, not in these backwaters.

Now I am growing old in the school where I began. I have not married. I lodge in a pub in Carrick-on-Shannon, I travel in and out the seven miles on a bike, to escape the pupils and their parents once the school is shut, to escape from always having to play an expected role. It is rumored that I drink too much.

With mostly indifference I stand at the window and watch Canon Reilly shake a confession out of the boy Walshe much as a dog shakes life out of a rat, and having nothing to do but watch I think of the sea; we went to the sea in summer, a black straggle in front of Novicemaster O'Grady, in threes, less risk of buggery in threes than pairs, the boards of the bridge across to the Bull hollow

under the tread of our black sandals and below the tide washing against the timber posts; far out on the Wall we stripped, guarding our eyes, on the rocks facing south across the bay to the Pidgeon House, and when O'Grady blew the whistle we made signs of the cross on ourselves with the salt water and jumped in, he blew it again when it was time for us to get out, we towed and dressed on the rocks, guarding our eyes, glad no sand could get between our toes, and in threes trooped home ahead of O'Grady past the wired-down idiotic palm trees along the front.

The bell for night prayers went at nine thirty, the two rows of pews stretching to the altar, a row along each wall and the bare linocovered space between empty of all furniture, and we knelt in the long rows in order of our rank, the higher the rank the closer to the altar. On Friday nights we knelt in the empty space between the pews and said: My very dear Brothers, I accuse myself of all the faults I have committed since my last accusation, I broke the rule of silence twice, three times I failed to guard my eyes. After a certain rank and age the guarding of the eyes wasn't mentioned, you were supposed to be past all that by then, but I never reached that stage, I got myself booted out before I became impervious to a low view of passing girls, especially on windy days.

The sea and the bell, nothing seems ever ended, it is such nonsense I'd like written on my gravestone in the hope they'd cause confusion.

"You admit it now after you saw you couldn't brazen your way out of it," Reilly shouts at the boy; he holds him by the arm in the empty space between the table and the long benches where the classes sit in rows, in this the schoolroom of the day.

"Now. Out with what you spent the money on."

"Lemonade," the low answer came, the white-faced boy starting to blubber.

"Lemonade, yes, lemonade, that's how you let the cat out of the bag. The Walshes don't have shillings to squander in the shops on lemonade every day of the week."

Still gripping the boy by the arm, he turned to the rows of faces in the benches.

"What sins did Walshe commit—mind I say *sins*, not one sin—but I don't know how to call it—this foul act?"

I watch the hands shoot up with more attention than I'd given to the dreary inquisition of the boy, I was under examination now.

"The sin of stealing, Canon."

"Good, but mind I said sins. It is most important in an examination of conscience before confession to know all the sins of your soul. One foul act can entail several sins."

"Lies, Canon."

"Good, but I'm looking for the most grievous sin of all."

He turns from the blank faces to look at me: why do they not know?

"Where was the poor box when it was broken open?" I ask, having to force the question out; even after the years of inspectors I've never got used to teaching in another's presence, the humiliation and the sense of emptiness in turning oneself into a performing robot in a semblance of teaching.

"In the church, sir."

"An offense against a holy person, place, or thing—what is that sin called?"

"Sacrilege," the hands at once go up.

"Good, but if you know something properly you shouldn't need all that spoon-feeding," the implied criticism of me he addresses to the children.

"Stealing, lies, and blackest of all—sacrilege," he turns again to the boy in his grip.

"If I hand you over to the police, do you know where that will lead, Walshe? To the reformatory. Would you like to go to the reformatory, Walshe?"

"No, Canon."

"You have two choices then. You can either take your medicine from me here in front of the class, or you can come to the barracks. Which'll you take?"

"You, Canon," he tries to appease with an appearance of total abjection and misery.

"It's going to be no picnic then. You'll have to be taught once and for all in your life that the church of God is sacred," he raises his voice close to declamation, momentarily releases his grip on the arm, takes a length of electric wire from his pocket; the boy whimpers as quietly the priest folds it in two before taking a firm grip on the arm again.

"It's going to hurt, Walshe. But if you're ever again tempted to steal from the church, you'll have something to remember!"

In a half-circle the beating moves, the boy trying to sink to the floor to escape the whistle and thud of the wire wrapping round his bare legs but held

up by the arm, the boy's screaming and the heavy breathing of the priest filling the silence of the faces watching from the long benches in frightened fascination. When he finally lets go the arm the boy sinks in a heap on the floor, the moaning changing to a hysterical sobbing.

"Get up and go to your place, and I hope that's the last lesson you'll have to be ever taught," he puts the length of wire back in his pocket, and takes out a blue cloth to wipe his forehead.

The boy cowers as he rises, arms automatically protecting the torn legs, moves in a beaten crawl to his place, plunges his face in rage and shame in the folds of his arms and continues hysterically sobbing.

"Open your geographies and get on with your study of the Shannon," I say as the heads turn to Walshe.

There's the flap of the books being opened, they find the page, stealing a quick furtive look toward the boy as they bend their heads. In the sobbing silence the clock ticks.

"An example had to be made to nip that black-guardism in the bud," he turns to me at the window.

"I suppose."

"How do you mean *suppose*?" The eyes are dangerous.

"I suppose it was necessary to do."

"It *was* necessary," he emphasizes, and after a pause, "What I'd like to see is religious instruction to counteract such influences after Second Mass every Sunday. Mr. McMurrough always took it."

"It's too far for me to come from the town to take."

"I can't see any justification for you living in the town. I can't see why you can't live in the parish. The Miss Bambricks at the post office have mentioned to me that they'd be glad to put you up."

The Miss Bambricks were two church-mad old maids who grew flowers for the altar and laundered the linen.

Old McMurrough, whom I had replaced while he lay dying in the Sligo madhouse reciting poetry and church doctrine, had taken catechism in the church each Sunday, while the Canon waited at the gate to bear any truant who tried to escape with the main congregation back in triumph by the ear to the class in the sidechapel.

"But I am happy where I am."

"And there are many in the parish who think a public house in town is no lodging for a person who has charge of youth."

"I conduct myself there."

"I'd sincerely hope so, but, if I may say so, it's not very cooperative."

"I am sorry but I do not want to change," I answer doggedly. With bent heads the class follows each word with furtive attention, but he changes

Dublin-born and educated, John McGahern has received many prizes and awards for his stories. He taught at Colgate during the 1968–1969 academic year and is currently living and writing in Paris.

in frustration at last, "The Christian Brother will come after lunch today."

"I'll take the other children outside while he speaks to the boys."

"They're getting it very tough to get vocations. Even tougher still to keep those they do get. They're betwixt and between, neither priests nor laymen," he volunteers, but I don't want discussion.

"They may be lucky."

"The backward rural areas are their great standby. Even if they don't stay the course, they'll get an education which they'd not get otherwise."

"That's how I got mine."

The hurt from my own mouth was not as great as if it had come from his, but nothing seemed ever ended and done with.

"Well, it was some use then."

"Yes. It was some use."

I watch him on his way, at the door he shouts a last warning to the sniffling Walshe, "I hope that'll be one lesson your life will never forget and you can count yourself lucky that there was no police."

There would be no repercussions from the beating except Walshe would probably get beaten again when the news traveled home, and in a few days if asked who had scored his legs, he'd answer that he fell in briars.

I watch the black suit, shiny from car leather, climb the last steps to the roadgate, pausing once to inspect a crack in the concrete, and I turn to wipe the blackboard, afraid of my own hatred.

"Now I'll see what you've learned about the Shannon."

Papers rustle in the benches, there's a quick expectant buzz. Outside, the three stone walls of the playground run down to the lake, the center wall broken by the concrete lavatory, above it the rapid sparkle of pinpoint flashes of sunlight on the wings of the black-dust swarm of flies, and on the sill in a jam jar a fistful of primroses some child has gathered from the May banks. In the stream of sunlight across the blackboard the chalk dust floats, millions of white grains, breathed in and out all day, found at night in the turnups of trousers, all the aridity of this empty trade.

"You, Murphy, tell me where the Shannon rises?"

A blank face answers in a pretense of puzzled concentration, and why should he know, his father's fields and cattle will see him through.

"Please, sir."

The room is full of hands.

"Tell Murphy where the Shannon rises, Handley," a policeman's son, who'll have to put his trust in his average wits.

"Shannon Pot, sir, in the Cuilceach Mountains."

"Can you tell the class now, Murphy, where it rises?"

"Shannon Pot, sir, in the Cuilceach Mountains," a look of triumph on his well-fed face as he haltingly repeats it.

"Where does it flow? Mary?"

"Southwards into Lough Allen close to the town of Drumshambo," the quick answer comes.

"What factory have they there?"

"Breffni Blossom Jams."

"Anybody's father send apples there?"

Three hands.

"Prior? Tell about the sending of the apples."

"We pick them, sir. Put them in a heap, same as potatoes, but on the ground, we cover them with straw."

"Why do you cover them with straw?"

"Frost, sir."

A low knock comes on the door that leads to the infant classroom and my one assistant, Mrs. Maguire, comes in. She is near retirement: the slack flesh fills the ample spaces of the loose black dress, but the face in contrast is curiously hard, as if all the years of wrestling with children had hardened it into intransigent assurance.

"When Mrs. Maguire says something Mrs. Maguire means what she says," the third-person reference punctuates everything she says. Now a look of anxious concern shows in the unblinking eyes.

"What happened with the Canon?"

"He thrashed Walshe for breaking into one of the poor boxes."

I didn't want her to stay, though I too had often used the glow of fabricated concern to hurry or escape the slow minutes of the school day.

"Terrible. Awful," she echoes a dull safety, hers and mine.

"We'll talk about it at lunch then."

"The world, the world," she ponders as she withdraws to her own room.

I look at the clock, the crawl of the minutes, never the happiness of imagining it two o'clock and looking up and finding it half past three. "Will you be an absorbed teacher where your work will be like a game, or a clock watcher?" Jordan, the education lecturer, had asked after a lecture; it was his custom after a lecture to select one student to walk with him through the corridor with its shine of wax and the white marble busts of the saints and philosophers on their pedestals along the walls.

"I hope I'll be absorbed, sir."

"I hope so too for your sake. I can imagine few worse hells than a teacher who is a clock watcher, driven to distraction by the children, while the day hangs about him like lead."

I could answer him now, I was a clock watcher, and the day mostly hung like lead, each morning a dislocation of your life in order to entice or bend

their opposing wills to yours, and the day a concentration on this hollow grapple, but it seemed good as anything else and it's easier to stay than move.

"We'll leave the apples for a time and go on with the Shannon."

The class drags on until the iron gate on the road sounds. A woman comes down the concrete steps.

The first thought: a mother come to complain, the almost instinctive marshaling of the reassuring clichés, "The child is sensitive, and when it loses the sensitivity will surprise us all, to force it now can only cause damage, you have nothing to worry about."

"That was my trouble at that age, I was too sensitive, I was never understood."

"Thank you for coming to see me."

"I feel less worried now."

In the beginning, everybody was sensitive, and never understood, but hides hardened.

This time it was no mother, it was a Miss Martin, she lived with her brother across the empty waste of wheat-colored sedge and stunted birch of the Gloria bog. She made toys from used matchsticks in the winter nights, I'd heard said.

"I wonder if I could take young Horan from his lessons for a few minutes, sir. It's the ringworm."

"Luke, see Miss Martin in the porch." The boy goes quietly out to the porch, already charmingly stolid in the acceptance of his power, Luke, magical fifth in a line of male children unbroken by girls; and while he waited under the water of his baptism at the stone font in Cootehall Church, a worm was placed in his hand, either the priest didn't see or was content to ignore it, but the Horans rejoiced, their fifth infant boy would grow up with the power of healing ringworm.

On Tuesdays and on Fridays, days of the sorrowful mysteries, he touches the sores thrice in the name of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost, and the invisible worm widening the raw coin on the skin dies, power of magic and religion killing the slow worm patiently circling.

"Did you wash your hands, Luke?"

"Yes, sir. I used the soap."

"Show them to me."

"All right. You can get on with your work."

The last to come before lunch is the tinker, with pony and cart, the brass shining on the harness, to clean out the lavatory, and as I give him the key we make polite professional remarks about the flies and heat.

"Ah, but not to worry, sir. I'll bury it deep," he touches his cap. Soon, soon, they'll come and flush him and me into the twentieth century whatever the good that will do, and I grow ashamed of the

violence of the thought, and as if to atone, over lunch, give Mrs. Maguire a quiet account of the poor box.

After lunch the recruiting officer finally comes, dressed all in black, with a black briefcase, on the throat the half-collar of the Christian Brother instead of the priest's full collar, a big white-haired man, who seems made more to follow plowing horses than to stand in classrooms. The large hand lifts the briefcase on the table.

"My name is Brother Mahon, and Canon Reilly kindly gave me permission to speak to the senior boys about a vocation to the Irish Christian Brothers." I wonder if he knows I too had been one once as he is now; if he looks at me as a rotten apple in the barrel; but if he does he says nothing, all glory to the power of the Lie or Silence that makes people easy in the void, all on our arses except the helping hand it gives us on our way.

"I told Canon Reilly I'd take the other children out to the playground while you spoke."

"Lucky to have such a fine manager as the Canon, takes a great interest in schools."

"Couldn't ask for a better manager," I answer, the brick supports the brick above it, I'm a rogue and you're another. "I'll just take them outside now."

"All except the boys of the sixth class, take your English book and follow me outside," and again, because I feel watched, the voice is not my own, a ventriloquist's dummy that might at any minute fall apart.

The brother motions the scattered boys closer to the table, "It'll only be just a man-to-man chat," as I take the others out, to sit against the white wall of the school in the sun, facing the lake, where the tinker is putting the green sods back above the buried shit, the flies thick above the cart and grazing pony.

Through the open window the low voice drifts out into the silence of the children against the wall in the sun, and I smile as I listen; if one could wait long enough everything was repeated. I wonder who'll rise to the gleaming spoon and find the sharpened hooks as I did once.

"I want you to imagine a very different lake shore to your own little lake below your school.

"Hot sands," the words drift out, "palm trees, glittering sea, tired after fishing all the night and washing their nets, tall dark man comes through the palms down to the water.

"We have labored all the night and have taken nothing. The two boats were so full of fish that they began to sink. Fall on their knees on the sand, and the tall man, for it was Jesus, lifted them up and said to them, follow me, from henceforth you will catch men, words and words and words.

"In this schoolroom two thousand years later I bring you the same message. Follow me and catch

men. Follow me into the Irish Christian Brothers, where as teachers you will lead the little children He so loved to Christ.

"For death comes as a thief in the night, the longest life is but a day, and when you go before the Judgment Seat can you without trembling go and say to Jesus I refused the call even the tired fishermen answered, and what if He refuses you as you refused Him?"

He sends them out into the porch, and brings them back one by one to interview them alone, while the tinker hands me back the keys, "I've buried it deep, sir. There'll be no flies," and the rise and fall of voices come from Mrs. Maguire's infant prison house, *Eena, meena, mina moo, capall, asal agus bo*.

Name, age, your father's farm? he asks, and more to silence my own memory than the low chatter of the children I force, "Come on now, get on with your reading," but after they grow silent to read my real mood covertly, the chatter grows loud again.

"You have listened to all that I've said?" I'd been asked once too.

"Yes, Brother," I had answered.

"Do you think you could spend your life as a Christian Brother?"

"I'm not sure, Brother."

"Do you think your parents would have any objection?"

"I don't know, Brother."

"What do you say we go and have a little talk with them after I've seen the rest of the boys?"

It was finished then, my mother's face had lighted when he drove me home, "It would be an honor to have a Christian Brother in the family." "He'll get a free education too, the best there is," and that August I was in the train with the single ticket, fear of the unknown rooms and people. She had driven me out with the same strength as my brother was to use later to put her in a back room with the old furniture of her marriage while his new wife reigned amid the new furniture of the best rooms; and now each summer I take her to her usual small hotel at the sea, and I walk by her side on the sand saying, "Yes and yes and yes," to her complaints about my brother and his wife until she tires herself into relief and changes, "Do you think should I go to the baths after lunch?" "Go to the baths, it'll do your arthritis good."

"I think I'll go then."

I want to ask her why she sent me away then, but I don't ask, I walk by her side on the sand, and echo her life with "Yes and yes and yes," for it is all a wheel.

A light tap comes on the window, a gesture of spread hands that he is finished, and I take the children in. Two of the boys have been set apart, with their schoolbags.

"I'm driving John and Jim to their houses, we'll talk over everything with their parents."

"I hope it'll be all right."

"We'll see that everything is made clear. Thank you for your help."

After the shaking of hands I turn to the board but I do not want to teach.

"Open your English books and copy page forty-one in your best handwriting."

I stand at the window while the nibs scrape. Certainly nothing I've ever done resembles so closely the shape of my life as my leaving of the Holy Brothers; having neither the resolution to stay on nor the courage to leave, the year before Final Vows I took to bed and refused to get up.

"The doctor says you're in perfect health. That there's nothing the matter with you," old Cogger, the boss, had tried to reason. "So why can't you get up when we are even short-staffed in the school?"

"I can't get up."

"What's wrong with you that you can't get up?"

"Nothing."

"If you don't get up, I have no option but to report you to General Headquarters."

I did not get up, he had no option, and the result was an order for my dismissal, but as quietly as possible so as not to scandalize my brothers in J. C. or the good people of the town. Old Cogger showed me the letter. I was to get a suit of clothes, underwear, railway ticket, and one pound. It revived me immediately. I told him the underwear I had would do, and he raised the one pound to five.

The next hurdle was how to get my fit in clothes in a small town without scandal. Old Cogger dithered till the day before I had to leave but at nightfall brought home two likely fits. I picked one, and packed it, and off we set by bus for Limerick, to all appearances a young Christian Brother and an old on some ordinary business to town, but old Cogger would come back alone. We did not speak on the way.

Behind a locked door and drawn curtains I changed in the guest room of the house in Limerick. I've wondered what happened to the black uniform I left behind, whether they gave it to another C.B. or burned it as they burn the clothes of the dead. Cogger showed me to the door as I left for the train, but I can't remember if he wished me luck or shook hands or just shut the door on my back. I had a hat too, yes a brown hat and a blue suit, but I didn't realize how bloody awful they looked until I met my sisters on O'Connell Bridge. They colored with shame; afraid to be seen walking with me, they rushed me into a taxi and didn't speak until they had me safely inside the front door of the flat, when one doubled up on the sofa unable to stop laughing, and the other swore at me, "In the name of Jasus what possessed the Christians to sail you out into the world in a

getup the like of that, or you to appear in it?" Though what I remember most was the shock of *sir* when the waiter said "Thank you, sir," as I paid him for the cup of tea I had on the train.

Even if the memories are bitter they still quicken the passing of time. It is the sly coughing of the children that tells me the hands have passed three.

"All right. Put your books away and stand up."

In a fury the books are put away, and they are waiting for me on their feet

"Bless yourselves."

They bless themselves and chant their gratitude for the day.

"Don't rush the door, it's just as quick to go quietly."

I hear their whoops of joy go down the road, and I linger over the locking up. I am always happy at this hour, it's as if the chains of the day were worth wearing to feel them drop away. I feel born again as I start to pedal toward the town. How, how, though, can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter a second time his mother's bag of tricks? I laugh at last.

Was it not said by Water and the Holy Spirit?

Several infusions of whiskey at the Bridge Bar, contemplation of the Shannon through its windows—it rises in the Shannon Pot, it flows to the sea, there are stranger pike along its banks than in its waters—will keep this breath alive until the morning's dislocation. □

SURVIVING

We fought well together,
in a good rhythm,
taking turns scouting the trail,
plotting our next doomed move,
meeting the enemy breath to breath.
And counting the dead.
Together we pulled their names up over their faces
and spit in the dust, choked on the luck
that anyone survived.

That we survived.
"We will be destroyed!" I'd cry,
thankful for company.
Then one night, coming toward my tent
swinging my lantern, whistling,
my light points to my friend
who drank my whiskey read my diary lay in my bed
wore my clothes
dissolving into the dark
with everything of mine he can drag or carry.

"Friend!" I call. "My friend."
He never stops
but says, to no one,
"I have been destroyed."
He drags my corpse behind him,
bumping across the stones.

by Rosellen Brown

THE LITTLE BIG MAN WHO LAUGHS AT THE LAW

by Nicholas Gage

When Maier Suchowljansky arrived on Ellis Island from Grodno, Russia, in 1911, his mother, in all the confusion, could not remember the day or even the month in which he had been born nine years earlier. So the immigration officials gave him July 4 as a birthdate, hoping, perhaps, to instill in the boy a sense of patriotism and high aspirations.

In many ways Maier Suchowljansky, who Americanized his name to "Meyer Lansky," lived up to that hope. He became so patriotic that he moved heaven and earth to get his older son into West

Point. He is an ardent supporter of U. S. involvement in Vietnam. As for material success, he set his aspirations high and has achieved the directorship of a network of enterprises as big as General Motors. His personal fortune is estimated to be somewhere between \$100 million and \$300 million.

The thing that sets Meyer Lansky apart from most men who have achieved the American Dream is his line of business. He chose to pursue his ambitions not in steel or oil, not in automobiles or banking, but in crime. In that field he is as much of a visionary and innovator as Andrew Carnegie,



Henry Ford, and John D. Rockefeller were in theirs. Lansky's career has been long and mysterious, but federal law enforcement authorities have followed it with interest. The information they have collected makes it possible to piece together an outline of the Lansky story. Lansky is the main architect of the giant conglomerate that is organized crime in the United States. Forty years ago he helped pull together a group of rival gangs, including the Mafia, into a national network and then proceeded to shape it into a silent, streamlined colossus which is now, in his own words, "bigger than U. S. Steel."

As a director of the organized crime syndicate, of which the Mafia is the biggest branch, Lansky is so powerful that he controls legitimate corporations, runs a gambling network that stretches from Las Vegas to Beirut, and "buys" whole governments with bribes. Even the U. S. Navy once had to plead for his help.

He has convinced the syndicate to de-emphasize such high-risk enterprises as narcotics, prostitution, and murder-by-contract, and enter new fields such as banking, investments, manufacturing, and real estate by using thousands of fronts, some so sophisticated they may never be penetrated. In addition, he has developed new ways to promote the most lucrative traditional source of income—gambling—in the Caribbean, England, Europe, and the Middle East.

Lansky the man is a fascinating series of contradictions. His personal style is radically different from that of the cigar-smoking professional mobster portrayed by Edward G. Robinson in *Little Caesar* or by Rod Steiger in *Al Capone*. At sixty-eight, Lansky is gray-haired, short, thin, even ascetic in appearance. In many ways he is indistinguishable from a successful investment broker on a two-week Miami Beach vacation from Scarsdale. His suits are conservative in cut, and his home, until recently, was a modest three-bedroom ranch-style house in Hallandale, Florida, a suburb of Miami. He drives (rented) Chevrolets, walks the family dog, and goes home every night to his wife. He brags about the grandchildren, takes his wife with him on annual vacations to Europe, and carefully shields her from contacts with his underworld friends. On the few instances when he was pushed into the public spotlight, Lansky showed occasional flashes of dry humor and an apparently relaxed, quiet demeanor.

About a year ago Lansky sold the house in Hallandale and moved to a beachfront apartment building with tight security at 5001 Collins Avenue in Miami Beach, a short walk from the Fontaine-

bleau and Eden Roc Hotels. He reportedly made the move because he feared that the suburban home exposed him to the danger of being kidnapped for ransom by the Young Turks in the underworld, a fate that befell some New York gang leaders in late 1968.

It would be out of character for Lansky to go around trailed by a string of bodyguards. It would also belie the image he tries to maintain of a retired businessman living off moderate investments. Instead, he counts for protection on the FBI agents who have been tailing him for over a decade. Rather than trying to shake his shadows in traditional crime-movie style, he carefully slows down whenever he notices the FBI car has fallen behind, to give it a chance to catch up.

When he does feel that the law is crowding him too much, however, Lansky resorts to a favorite ploy—he pretends to be a very sick man, close to death. Whenever the heat is on—an investigation made public, a grand jury inquiry, a new task force of federal crime-fighters on his trail—the story starts to go around that Lansky is dying of cancer or some other terminal illness. A report in the files of the New York State Police, dating from the 1920s, states that there's no need to worry about Meyer Lansky's criminal abilities, because he can't survive the year. This report, to paraphrase Mark Twain, was greatly exaggerated. Lansky today is in the pink of health and looks ten years younger than his age. "He'll probably live to be a hundred," says an old friend and former racketeer.

Like any good businessman with a social conscience, Lansky makes occasional contributions to charity, but he is careful to make them small, in keeping with his image. They are usually between \$2500 and \$5000 and are given to reputable institutions. Lansky has made at least two small contributions to Brandeis University at the behest of his friend Joseph Linsey, a Boston businessman with underworld associations who is a large contributor to the university. Lansky has a 1962 letter from Abram Sachar, former president of Brandeis, thanking him for a contribution arranged by Mr. Linsey.

Even Lansky's tax returns, it is said, portray a retired investor living in moderate comfort off the return of a few prudent holdings. Lansky can justify every expenditure to the last cent, and he often doesn't take even the deductions to which he is entitled. For example, his holdings include \$90,000 worth of oil and gas leases which he bought in 1960 from Sam Garfield, a Michigan businessman who, over the years, has been associated in a number of deals with Lansky. To justify the sudden possession of such a large amount of cash, Lansky made it known first that he received a loan from a friend for \$90,000 and then started making payments to Garfield. He is still drawing dividends from this investment, which is quite legal and helps him justify some of his modest expenditures.

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Another ploy used to justify his income came to light last November when the *Toronto Telegram* told the story of a bemused Toronto stockbroker who, not knowing who Lansky was, agreed to arrange the purchase of \$250 worth of mining claims in Canada for him. According to federal officials, four months later Lansky had the broker handle the sale of the same mining claims to two New Yorkers for \$40,000. Lansky subsequently claimed the \$38,750 "profit" on the deal as a capital gain and paid tax on it much to the dismay of the Internal Revenue Service. The IRS believes that Lansky himself had given the New Yorkers the \$40,000 to buy the claims and thereby legitimize or "dry clean" nearly \$40,000 of mob profits. Because the deal had taken place in Canada, there was no legal action the IRS could take.

In spite of being one of the richest and most powerful men in the United States, Lansky maintains his modest life-style down to the last detail, and with good reason. He has only to reminisce on the fate of his more flamboyant colleagues to be reminded of what happens to gangsters who flaunt their wealth. He started out with men like Joe Adonis, Frank Costello, Vito Genovese, Louis Lepke, Lucky Luciano, Dutch Schultz, and Bugsy Siegel. All loved to let their money show, and all wound up either executed, assassinated, deported, imprisoned, or deposed.

So Lansky hides his wealth and courts anonymity with a passion worthy of Howard Hughes. His phone number is unlisted and is changed periodically. When the phone rings, he never answers it personally but has his wife tell everyone but his closest friends that he is not home. He has never willingly given an interview. During the past year, I have written him several letters asking for interviews for this article and other assignments, but he has never answered any of them. A few months ago I was in Miami Beach driving slowly near where he lives when I caught sight of him, deeply tanned and comfortably dressed in dark blue trousers and a lightly checked blue shirt, casually walking his dog in front of his apartment house. But his sharp eyes caught my car slowing to a stop, and he quickly led his dog, a miniature Tibetan Shih Tzu named Bruiser, into his apartment house before I could reach him.

Whenever Lansky is called before a grand jury or an investigating committee, reporters try to catch him outside the jury rooms. Most of the time they fail. He has the building where he is to appear carefully scrutinized beforehand and usually knows some side exit he can use to slip out undetected. And on the few occasions reporters have managed to catch up to him, he has proven quite deft at not answering questions. When James Savage, a Miami *Herald* reporter, cornered him after a grand jury

appearance last year and asked him for a comment on the proceedings, Lansky smiled and shook his head. "I don't want to take the drama out of your stories, so I don't think I'll say anything," he replied. At another grand jury appearance six months ago he was stopped by Hank Messick, a veteran investigative reporter who has written several books on the underworld, and once again Lansky turned away questions with carefully chosen quips. "At least you have a sense of humor," Messick remarked after he gave up trying to get any direct answers. "If you don't have a sense of humor, you don't have anything," Lansky said with a grin, and walked away.

He seldom goes out, and when he does, it is only to restaurants and clubs operated by old friends in the rackets. Word goes out early that "Joe Meyer" (Lansky's favorite code name) will be visiting that evening. A quiet table in a dark corner is selected and kept in readiness so he doesn't have to wait. He likes plain food and one, at most two, bourbons before dinner. He has never been a heavy drinker or a ladies' man. He smokes cigars after meals and cigarettes in between. He is greatly concerned about the health dangers associated with cigarettes, but hasn't managed to quit, and he doesn't like the taste of filtered cigarettes, so he uses a three-inch cigarette holder, which he believes helps keep out tar and nicotine.

Lansky's main pleasures are simple. He likes to travel, to go for walks, and to lie in the sun. Often he can be seen stretched out on a reclining chair by the swimming pool of the Eden Roc Hotel, near his apartment house, soaking up the sun. He is only 5 feet 4 inches tall, and in swimming trunks he loses the rather imposing presence he commands otherwise. He likes to walk so much that he sometimes interrupts his meetings to go for a stroll on the beach.

At least once a year Lansky goes to Europe with his wife, but he manages to combine business with sightseeing. In his hotel rooms, where he spends most of his time, the Syndicate's overseas representatives come to report to the chairman. Mrs. Lansky is never introduced to any of these men, and the meetings are never held in her presence.

These and other signs indicate that Lansky keeps his wife, an attractive sometime-blonde twenty years his junior, at least partially in the dark about his real wealth and position. On the rare occasions when they go out together, he is careful to tip much less than when he is with friends or dining alone. When a reporter once knocked on the door of the Lanskys' Hallandale home, Mrs. Lansky informed him through the screen door that her husband was "misunderstood by the press and the FBI."

Lansky's "office" is often a guarded room at the Singapore Hotel, one of several Miami Beach hotels under his control. From there he formulates plans, issues instructions, and divides the money that couriers bring in from Las Vegas, the Bahamas, and

from the various other sources of Syndicate wealth.

Never far from his side are Vincent ("Jimmy Blue Eyes") Alo, representing the Mafia, and Sam Tucker, the delegate for a Midwestern group of gangsters known as the Cleveland syndicate. By about 4 p.m. every day, Lansky stops working and heads for his apartment, often accompanied by his brother and chief lieutenant, Jake Lansky.

Like many another self-made millionaire, Lansky adheres to a brand of politics that is distinctly right-wing. On Vietnam, for example: "He thinks we should go in there and blow Hanoi to pieces," says an acquaintance. "He's really disgusted with all these demonstrations against the war."

Lansky's fervent conservatism and anti-Communism may have something to do with the end Fidel Castro put to his flourishing gambling setup in Cuba in 1959. But there are those, such as one federal agent, who believe that a right-wing outlook is concomitant with underworld success. "A lot of your mob chiefs are fierce conservatives," he says. "They're guys who came to this country with nothing and who did very well here, who found this a land of plenty. So, in the right-wing sense of the word, they're quite the ardent patriots."

Lansky is so patriotic, in fact, that in 1949 he used all the political influence at his command to win an appointment to West Point for his older son, Paul. He was nominated by the late New York State Supreme Court Justice Arthur G. Klein, who was then a congressman. Paul Lansky did fairly well at the school and rose to the rank of captain in the Air Force before resigning in 1963 to begin an engineering career on the West Coast. He now lives in Tacoma, Washington, with his wife and children and is a respected member of his community. To keep Paul's life from being affected by the Lansky name, Meyer has spread the rumor that his son broke with him several years ago and that they have not spoken to each other in a long time. This is not true, however. Lansky talks frequently with Paul on the telephone, sees his son whenever he can, and speaks proudly to his friends of the kind of life Paul has made for himself.

Lansky has two other children, another son and a daughter. The son, Bernard, who is known as Buddy, lives in a comfortable house near his father's old home in Hallandale and is often seen in supervisory positions in hotels and motels in which Meyer is said to have an interest. Lansky is very close to Bernard, who has been partially crippled since childhood, and spends a lot of time with him. Lansky's daughter, Sandra, has been married twice and had a reputation as a swinger when she was young.

Most Italians in the underworld share the opinion of Angelo ("Gyp") De Carlo, who, in a phone

conversation taped by the FBI in New Jersey, referred to Lansky as the most respected non-Italian in the underworld. "There's only two Jews recognized in the whole country today," he said. "That's Meyer and . . . Moe Dalitz, but he [Dalitz] ain't got much recognition." (Dalitz is one of the founders of the uniquely successful "Cleveland syndicate," and until recently the man responsible for supervising the underworld's investments in Las Vegas.)

Lansky is easily the most heeded underworld leader, and for several good reasons. First, he has survived longer than anyone else in the underworld. In his fifty years in crime he has spent only three months in jail. Second, anyone who has associated himself with Lansky has made big money. Third, and most important, he possesses the best brain.

It was Lansky who developed the worldwide network of couriers, middlemen, bankers, and frontmen that allows the underworld to take profits from illegal enterprises, to send them halfway around the world and then have the money come back laundered clean to be invested in legitimate businesses.

The way this works is beautifully simple. Lansky's couriers take the Mafia's "black money"—profits from illegal activities—to secret bank accounts in Switzerland, where the money is "washed clean in the snow of the Alps," as the joke goes. What happens is that middlemen in Europe take the money out of the accounts and route it back to the states through various devices such as mortgages and loans. This "clean money" is then used for legitimate investments. There is no way to find out the ultimate source of the money because it can be traced back only to the Swiss banks, and they won't divulge the names of depositors.

Occasionally, however, there is a rent in the veils concealing the underworld's money-laundering operations, providing a glimpse of the faces of the men behind them. And law enforcement officials are not surprised to find that many of the faces are easily recognizable as close friends and associates of the crime boss.

In early 1967, for example, a group of gangsters tried to defraud the Chase Manhattan Bank of almost \$2 million, using the Exchange Bank of Geneva, Switzerland, as a cover. The fraud was uncovered before the money was transferred to the Geneva bank, and an immediate investigation was launched that ultimately resulted in an indictment of the bank as a co-conspirator in the caper.

The investigation revealed that the Swiss bank had served as a "laundry shop" for Mafia money for years. It was also discovered that the bank was owned by a group of Americans. The two principal owners were New York brassiere manufacturers with clean records. But other owners included Edward Levinson, the former Las Vegas casino operator who works for the Lansky syndicate, and Benjamin Siegelbaum, another Lansky associate.

In Europe, Lansky's chief watchdog and head of operations is John Pullman, a former bootlegger who started out in the rackets with Lansky in the 1920s. Pullman was born in Rumania, naturalized as an American citizen, and denaturalized in 1954. He then went north, where he became a Canadian citizen, and finally moved to Switzerland as Lansky's chief overseas representative. He lives in Lausanne, but is always shuttling to Geneva, Rome, Paris, London, and Toronto for meetings with Lansky's representatives and, at least once a year, with Lansky himself.

The man whose shadow blankets the underworld got an early start in crime. He was first picked up by the police when he was sixteen. By the time he was twenty-seven, he had been arrested five times on charges ranging from disorderly conduct to suspicion of homicide. But not once were the police able to make the charges stick.

An incident in 1926 explains why. A man named John Barrett was found near death from bullet wounds in a New York alley and rushed to a hospital. When he recovered consciousness, he told the police he had been shot and then pushed from a car by Lansky because of an argument over the loot from a warehouse robbery. Barrett agreed to testify against Lansky and was placed under heavy guard. When he discovered that his hospital food had been laced with arsenic, however, he decided he couldn't rely on police protection and bought his life by refusing to sign a complaint against his assailants.

By this time Lansky had become a close friend and partner of Benjamin ("Bugsy") Siegel. Short and hawk-faced, Lansky admired the tall, boyishly handsome Siegel, so much so that he borrowed his idol's nickname, calling himself Bugs Meyer for a while. They first hired themselves out as gunmen to Legs Diamond, and then started their own gang. The Bugs and Meyer Mob, as it was called, did a thriving business protecting liquor shipments from hijackers for the various gangs then operating in New York and New Jersey.

Siegel and Lansky did so well that when various East Coast gangs formed an alliance to coordinate rum-running on the Eastern seaboard, they became members of the governing board. Lansky was appointed controller of the merged group, which came to be known as the Eastern syndicate.

In the early 1930s the Eastern syndicate began to link up with the Cleveland and Reinfeld syndicates—groups that specialized in smuggling bootleg booze from Canada—and other regional mobs to form the National Syndicate. It included representatives of several ethnic groups: Anglo-Saxons like Owney ("The Killer") Madden; Irishmen like "Big Bill" Dwyer; Italians like Lucky Luciano, Joe Adonis, and Frank Costello; and Jews like Jake ("Gurrah")

Shapiro, Louis ("Lepke") Buchalter, and of course, Meyer Lansky.

The Syndicate was not then (and it is not now) a firmly structured organization, but rather a federation of various gangs pursuing their own goals in their own ways. On questions of common interest, however, they came together and reached common decisions. The decisions were made by a board of major gang leaders, all theoretically equal in rank, with one of them serving as chairman. At the outset this position of "first among equals" was held by Lucky Luciano, then head of the Mafia.

The tie-up with the Cleveland syndicate provided important lessons in Lansky's education as a gangster. The four leaders of this group—Moe Dalitz, Morris Kleinman, Sam Tucker, and Louis Rothkopf (now dead)—were more subtle, and often more effective, than crime leaders in the East. They relied more on the bribe than on the bullet, led inconspicuous personal lives, and kept well hidden behind numerous fronts. Lansky was to study their methods, refine them, and use them to lead organized crime in the United States into a new era.

But all that took time. In the 1930s Lansky and his associates were still toiling in the usual underworld vineyards—narcotics, prostitution, hijacking, extortion, gambling. For a time, Lansky, Bugsy Siegel, Louis Lepke, and Lucky Luciano ran a factory in the Bronx section of New York to extract morphine from an opium base for the illicit drug market.

Each man had other things going, and none took it too hard when this project failed to fulfill its early promise. Lepke, for one, teamed up with Gurrah Shapiro to recruit a group of vicious contract killers like Albert Anastasia and Abe Reles into the infamous Murder Inc. The organization served as the enforcement arm of the Syndicate, a national successor to the Bugs and Meyer Mob. But Lepke, an inventive man, decided to broaden it into a business that offered murder as a marketable service.

Murder Inc. ended the lives of an estimated 800 persons before prosecutors Burton Turkus and Thomas E. Dewey moved forcefully against the New York mobs. Their racket-busting almost shattered the Eastern syndicate altogether. Several of its leaders put as much distance as they could between themselves and New York while Dewey and Turkus were conducting their investigations.

Bugsy Siegel went to Hollywood, California, where he socialized with the movie stars he had always envied. (He shook down a number of them, but was so popular anyhow that Jean Harlow became godmother to two of his children.) And Lansky went to Hollywood, Florida, although he kept returning to New York, where he had an apartment until 1953.

The top man, Lucky Luciano, refused to leave the center of his operations. He was ultimately convicted by Dewey on so many counts of white slavery

that he was given a sentence of fifty years in prison.

Dewey thus eliminated some of the Syndicate's most powerful leaders, but in an indirect way he did the organization a favor. By compelling many of the remaining leaders, rather parochial at first, to leave New York, he forced them to spread their operations and make the Syndicate truly national.

Lansky, for one, built a whole new empire in southern Florida and the Caribbean by imitating the Cleveland group, particularly in the use of bribes to secure the cooperation of police officials and politicians.

How well the bribes worked was dramatized in the Kefauver Committee hearings several years later. Walter Clark, sheriff of Broward County, Florida, from 1933 to 1952, admitted, for example, that he not only provided "special policing" for Lansky's illegal gambling establishments but also deputized the men who drove armored cars carrying cash from casinos to the bank.

With Florida secure, Lansky went on to Cuba in 1937 to see what he could do about expanding his operations to the island. He found a willing listener in Fulgencio Batista, the former army sergeant then in power, and the two made plans for turning Havana into a playground for the rich. World War II, however, put an end to this initial effort. "There weren't any boats on the seas," Lansky later told the Kefauver Committee. "You can't live from the Cuban people themselves."

During the war Lansky played a key role in one of the strangest deals in which the U. S. government has ever been involved—Operation Underworld. The full story has never been told. But as it was outlined during the Kefauver hearings, Naval Intelligence decided that it needed the help of the Mafia to protect East Coast shipping from sabotage. Lucky Luciano was the only man who could arouse the Mafia to such service, but he was still in prison—and not likely to be feeling patriotic.

The Navy turned to Luciano's attorney, Moses Polakoff, who promised to talk to his client. But he said he needed someone with him whom Luciano would trust—Meyer Lansky. For several months Polakoff and Lansky visited Luciano regularly, and ultimately got some kind of agreement from him. (Luciano owed Lansky a big favor and was undoubtedly happy for the opportunity to pay him back. When Luciano was trying to rise to the top of the Mafia, Lansky made room for him by having some of his men kill the then head of the group, Salvatore Maranzano.)

How much Luciano's cooperation contributed to the nation's welfare is still a military secret, but it certainly contributed to Luciano's welfare. Lucky was paroled at the war's end and allowed to return to his native Italy, on the condition that he wouldn't again set foot in the Western Hemisphere.

In exile Luciano continued to influence the Syn-

dicate, but active leadership passed to a triumvirate that included Joe Adonis, Frank Costello, and Meyer Lansky. At this time, however, Lansky ran into a series of problems that kept him from enjoying his new prestige. First, his ally Fulgencio Batista failed to hold the presidency in Cuba, and Lansky had to postpone his plans for developing Havana to his liking.

Second, his personal life got quite complicated. Right after the war, Lansky met Thelma Schwartz, a manicurist at a New York hotel, and decided to marry her. But he was already married to the former Anna Citron, the mother of his children. So he had to persuade Anna to give him a divorce and to allow him the companionship of the three children. Finally, to add to his problems, Lansky's old friend Bugsy Siegel was causing trouble for the Syndicate. He was spending too much of its money to build the Flamingo Hotel in Las Vegas. And he was ignoring advice and getting involved in a factional struggle for control of the wire service supplying bookies with racetrack information.

These infractions were not serious enough in themselves to warrant severe action, but Siegel was showing the kind of growing independence and recklessness that threatened the subtle organization that men like Lansky were building. So, early in 1947, Syndicate leaders met in a Havana hotel suite with Lucky Luciano, who had sneaked back temporarily from Italy, to decide what to do about Bugsy. What transpired is not known, but it is certain that Lansky, a man who would not hesitate to put the organization above loyalty to an old friend, went along with the decision reached at the meeting.

On June 20, 1947, Siegel was sitting in the Beverly Hills home of his mistress, Virginia Hill, when two steel-jacketed slugs from an army carbine tore through the window and into his face. One slug smashed the bridge of his nose and drove into his left eye. The other entered his right cheek, passed through the back of his neck and shattered his vertebra. His right eye was later discovered on the dining room floor 15 feet away.

The Flamingo Hotel, which had gotten Siegel into trouble, started paying dividends the very day he was shot. Lansky, one of the original twenty-one investors, got back the \$62,500 he had put up many times over. And so did other Syndicate leaders. They went on to build bigger and better hotels and casinos and to make even more money, thanks in large degree to the ill-fated Bugsy. For it was Siegel who had awakened them to the gold in Las Vegas years before, when all they could see there was sand. In the end, however, it didn't help him much.

With most of his problems now solved, Lansky worked feverishly to take advantage of the postwar boom by launching hundreds of new operations all over the country.

He started real estate companies in several states; set up jukebox distribution outlets in Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York; opened a string of new casinos that stretched from Miami, Florida, to Saratoga, New York, and bought into several television manufacturing and servicing companies.

The money from all these ventures came rolling in with such speed that even Lansky had difficulty counting it. Records show that two of his illegal casinos in Florida—Greenacres and La Bohème—brought in \$1.6 million during one four-month period in 1949 alone.

Then in 1950 the Kefauver Committee turned the spotlight on Lansky, and America caught a glimpse of his power for the first time. The heat the committee generated forced officials in Florida and New York to shut down his casinos and to make noises about sending him to prison. He was indicted for gambling violations in both states, and an effort was started to have him deported. But in the end he served only a three-month sentence in New York—the first and last time Lansky ever went to jail.

When he got out, he headed for Cuba to revive his dream of turning Havana into a gambling paradise. His old friend Batista, who had won back the presidency in 1952 with Syndicate financing, gave him free reign.

Lansky turned Cuba into a gambling monopoly for himself and selected Syndicate friends. He had a law passed which allowed gambling only in hotels worth \$1 million or more, and proceeded to build the only hotels that would qualify. To safeguard his employees, he had Cuban immigration regulations adjusted so his dealers, pit bosses, and stickmen would be classified as “valuable technicians.”

During this period the ruling triumvirate in the Syndicate began to break up. First, Joe Adonis was deported to Italy, and then Frank Costello was persuaded to retire, not because of old age or poor health, but because of overexposure. He was too well identified with crime to remain the leader of the kind of organization the Syndicate was becoming. (Shortly afterward Costello was replaced as head of the Mafia as well. He did not protest either demotion and was allowed to go on living.)

As soon as he became the primary force in the underworld, Lansky began instituting a number of changes that enabled the Syndicate to penetrate deep into the economic life of America. He curtailed the practice of buying up small companies through friends and relatives. Such men always turned out to be more loyal than competent, and the businesses never got very far. Instead, he started sending Syndicate money to numbered accounts in Europe, where authorized middlemen would take it and lend it to American executives in quick need of capital. “Some of the biggest land acquisitions have been financed with Syndicate money from Europe,” says a Securities and Exchange Commission official.

To represent the Syndicate in the sophisticated businesses it was financing, Lansky began recruiting bright young men with no links to the underworld, and training them in the art of being invisible, which he has perfected. These men will be the inheritors of power in organized crime, making the job of law enforcement officials in the future even more difficult than it is now. “At least the old bunch had records and we knew them,” says one police official. “It will take us years just to identify this new button-down breed. And some we’ll probably never know.”

The admiration Lansky won for his innovations was slightly tarnished in 1959 when he lost Cuba to Fidel Castro. Lansky flew out of Havana the same day as Batista, but he left his brother Jake behind to see if he could arrange a deal with Castro’s men. Not only did the Cuban revolutionaries refuse to play ball, but they kept Jake hostage for twenty-five days before letting him return to Florida.

Lansky was so angry he called a meeting of the Syndicate board and persuaded it to put up a \$1 million price on Castro’s head. It was partly this bounty that worried U. S. officials when Castro later visited New York for a UN session and refused to abide by security restrictions. But the concern was unnecessary. By that time Lansky had withdrawn the bounty. Never a man to live in the past, he had become resigned to losing Cuba and was already focusing on the Bahamas.

In 1963 a plush new hotel, the Lucayan Beach, was built in Freeport on Grand Bahama Island by a group of companies under the control of Wallace Groves, an ex-convict who settled on the island twenty years ago. Just before the Lucayan Beach was finished, Groves won permission from the Bahamian government to open a casino in the hotel.

Soon after it opened, the casino was running with professional efficiency worthy of the best gambling parlors controlled by Lansky in Las Vegas. And with good reason. The men in charge turned out to be three longtime Lansky associates—Max Courtney, Frank Ritter, and Charles Brudner. Another key operative was Dan (“Dusty”) Peters, a Lansky courier of long and loyal service, who was observed making frequent trips to Miami Beach for meetings with Lansky.

Then in 1966 it was revealed that some of the highest officials in the United Bahamian Party had received secret payments from several companies controlled by Groves. Sir Stafford Sands, then minister of finance and tourism, actually got some \$1.8 million.

Sands later acknowledged to a Commission of Inquiry that Lansky had offered him \$2 million in 1960 to permit gambling on Grand Bahama, but said he turned the gangster down. The \$1.8 million

he received from the Groves companies, he insisted, was for "consultant and legal fees."

The revelations toppled the United Bahamian Party from power. Sands left the Bahamas for a castle he owns in Spain, and Lansky's men were expelled from the islands by the new party. Fear of Lansky's continued influence in the Bahamas has remained strong, however, so that when one of the new managers of the Lucayan Beach casino was observed fraternizing with Lansky in Miami Beach recently, the present operators of the casino quickly dismissed him.

With the heat on in the Bahamas, Lansky turned his attention to the growing number of casinos that were opening in England, Europe, and the Middle East. In England, for example, hundreds of small casinos and several large ones were launched after Parliament permitted gaming under certain conditions in 1960. It was not surprising then that Lansky's man Dino Cellini showed up as manager of the Colony Club, a posh casino in London's Berkeley Square, after being kicked out of the Bahamas.

Cellini was followed by another old Lansky friend, George Raft. The actor's associations with underworld figures go back to his pre-movie days, when he was associated with Owney ("The Killer") Madden. His trip to Hollywood was financed by the mob, and it was he who introduced Bugsy Siegel to Hollywood society in the late 1930s. Over the years Raft has been a front for a travel agency in California and a supermarket in Arizona. And he worked for Lansky at the El Casino de Capri in Havana, ostensibly as an entertainment director, until Castro closed the place down.

Both Cellini and Raft were expelled by British authorities, and the Colony Club closed down, but their departure in no way ended Lansky's interest in English casinos. He merely turned to less identifiable fronts recruited from the local gentry. At present Lansky is known to control at least five major casinos in England, mainland Europe, and the Middle East, and to be shopping around for others.

Lansky does not seem concerned about the drive against organized crime being mounted by the Justice Department in places like New Jersey. This may be due to the confidence he has that he can weather such storms, or it may be due to feelings attributed to him by a Miami underworld figure who says he knows Lansky well. "Lansky and a lot of other guys are banking on the fact that Florida seems to be President Nixon's favorite state, a place he likes to visit a lot and where he has a lot of friends. If the spotlight was turned on down here, it would make New Jersey look like small potatoes, and a lot of guys figure Nixon is not going to let that happen."

The Justice Department is not forgetting Lansky, however. It has beefed up its task force on organized crime in Miami, and has sent one of its better agents to head it. One of the primary targets of the task

force is Meyer Lansky. The gang leader was more than a little surprised upon returning to Miami recently from an underworld conference in Mexico to find himself being arrested for possession of drugs without a prescription. The charge has served notice on the crime boss that he is not going to be left alone to savor his millions.

At an age when several of his old partners in crime are selling their interests in the Syndicate, setting up trusts for their children, and retiring, grateful to have the chance to die of natural causes, Lansky is still scanning the world for new outlets for Syndicate activities. He has more money than he can use, and at present has very little opportunity to enjoy it. He has reached the top of the ladder unscathed, while the closest friends of his youth ended up behind bars, deported, or executed in gangland killings. Why doesn't he cash in his chips and retire?

The only answer that seems to make sense is that he thrives on the challenges that go with being in the vanguard of organized crime. Just as his former idol Bugsy Siegel always had a secret yen to be a movie star, Lansky always wanted to be a powerful business executive. In a thoroughly unorthodox manner, he has achieved his goal. He sees the Syndicate as a huge corporation whose growth and profits depend on his efforts. The new generation of Syndicate members with Brooks Brothers suits and degrees in accounting look to him for guidance. Henry Ford and Andrew Carnegie could not give up the risks and challenges of a lifetime at sixty-five, and neither can Lansky.

He spent most of his life trying to reach a position where he could really play the big executive—developing plans for vast new enterprises around the world, making decisions that involve millions. The official files on Lansky indicate that he has extorted, robbed, and murdered to get where he is, and he just can't give it all up now, even though he can never enjoy the great wealth he has amassed as long as he goes on. Meyer Lansky, a victimizer of men and laws for half a century, is himself a victim of his own dream. □



Wide World Photos.

THE WAY IT ALL COMES LOOSE

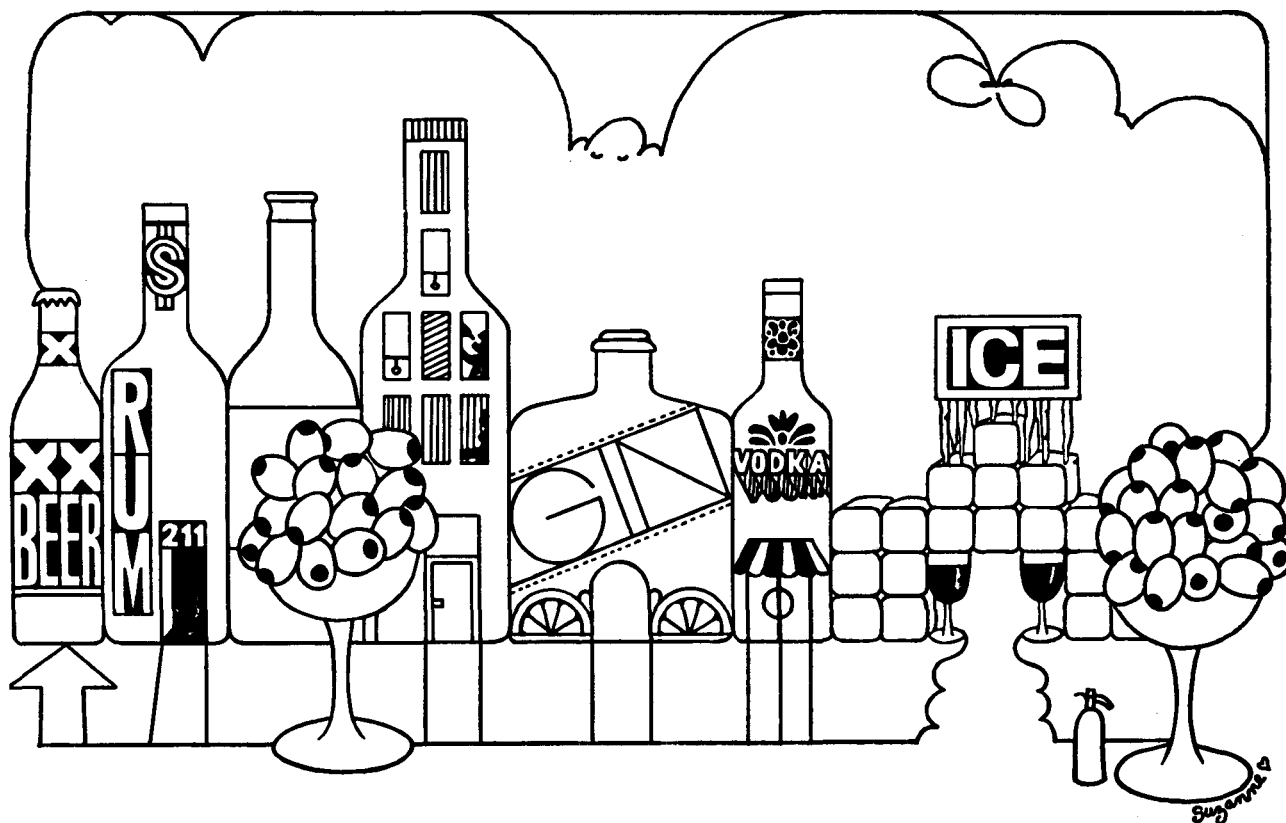
A story by Ralph Maloney

Christ, not five years ago I hustled a bar in Chatham fourteen hours a day seven days a week Memorial Day to the first of October. I killed a quart and pushed four-five hundred dollars' worth of booze every day. I made a poor kid's fortune and worked myself into terrific physical shape. About Labor Day I bought myself this tiny bathing suit, not much more than a jock, really, and spent an hour posing every afternoon on the beach. That kind of shape.

But in the last five years I've slowed down bad. Tending bar is strenuous manual labor, and I have carried hods up a ladder, so take my word. I can't do it anymore, and a doctor in Mount Kisco tells me that bump ain't water on the knee, it's my liver falling out, so that's the end of the quart a day, too. The last couple of years I must have worked a dozen different gigs around Yonkers and Westchester. I keep losing jobs, but never twice for the same reason and only once for drinking back of the bar. Between gigs I got the habit of hanging

around the house, and first thing I was behind in the rent and owed a gang of money all around. The U-Haul guy wouldn't take my paper, which proves that not all mechanics are stupid, so I broke out the check-writing machine for the first time in six or seven years, it's a felony, and printed a check for \$84.33 on I must say impeccable Union Carbide paper. I loaded the U-Haul at twilight and skipped.

I headed north because north means frontier someplace in my mind and took a house on the ocean in for Chrissakes Gloucester. Smartest sheriff in this broad land won't think to look for me in Gloucester. And on the ocean because I promised my daughter on Thirty-eighth Street one night, broke and sober, that we would always live on the water, some water, and to this day she doesn't know what a backyard in the suburbs is like. I gave the rental agent a Union Carbide checking-machine check for \$185 and moved in. Then I looked for work to get money to cover the checks



when they came back, or for bail, whichever is the lesser.

Alone I could make it. Even with my thirst. But I got a wife and three kids, and they are mine, and I will take care of them. Another guy in my position might skip. The saloon business is a good traveling trade. I could go to Chicago, the Coast, anywhere, and make a living. But they are mine, and I will take care of them. Besides, I have seen guys who skipped, and they walk around like their head was in a cloud of gnats. Anyway, I had a five-dollar bill and a head of hair like Curly McDimples, and I could get a fifth of gin or I could get a haircut and go to work. I got a haircut. I'm a pretty good father. The barber told me the two joints in Gloucester that make money in the winter, and under my new haircut I went to the first of them and got a job. It was a handsome, clean saloon and well stocked, all of which matters to me. Who am I at my age to hustle muscatel out of a Bowery kitchen? I liked the job. I wanted to keep it.

The trouble is up here in the woods a bartender is nobody, nothing. Tips are hopeless, but when I think it over and try to be as honest as I can, it's not the empty tip cup that bugs me but the absence of regard. Regard. I am not Charlie no-face, the friendly retainer. I am *somebody*. I had my own joint in New York and got taxed more than these peasants make. I used to spill more at breakfast than they drink all week.

Right now I feel like one of those stunted trees in a Japanese garden that is just learning blight, or worms. I liked the gig and wanted to keep it, but where I come from the bartender has authority. He says who drinks and who goes away. One night a face like many flags unfurl'd sits next to a chesty child I had been watching over and bumps into her and fondles her and orders a bourbon. "I'm sorry, sir," I say, watching will he swing or is he a passive, "I can't serve you. Go down the street." I was polite but firm. After some talk the accountant who owns the joint comes over and says, "This is Alderman Bob. Give him a drink on me." I say, "Alderman Bob is drunk. Let him go down the street for a drink or maybe go home and give his wife a break." That was all. That night the owner has a talk with me at closing and says he doesn't need a third bartender, and I say, "Yes you do. But it's not me." Calling the shots. Say it like it is. The accountant nods.

So I read the want ads a couple of days and left my name at places on 128 and in Boston and I got a job, again in the woods. I can always get hired. On brief consideration I will not accept that as an epitaph. The kid who owned the joint had a string

of quick-chicken stores around New England, and if you ask me, bought into the saloon business as a tax dodge, for walking-around money Uncle Sam doesn't get to count. He was all right. But he was smart, too, and he had lieutenants around him to fire his mistakes and to hurt and echo and laugh and — what is the word? Diminish. I will not be diminished. Watching war pictures, I have always thought I would stand up to torture as well as anybody.

The stock was low. I've seen more booze in my own kitchen. It was not a first-rate gig, but the pay was good and I needed the money. Their inventory system would never be disqualified for professionalism, and I made the tip cup stand up and sing. I mean twenty years pushing glassware you learn a couple of tricks. What started the trouble was the floor was linoleum over concrete. No give. No duckboards, as they are called in the trade. At ten, ten thirty every night my legs gave out, and I reeled around like a drunk. Funny thing, when my legs quit, my memory went, too, and I had to watch my temper. I had to ask the waitresses two, three times what they had just ordered, and if I dropped a glass or something I could feel the blood in my cheekbones. After a couple of nights, when I wasn't a new boy any longer, I explained to the lieutenant in charge of me about the duckboards. They're cheap enough. But his feet didn't hurt, and he didn't listen very hard. Talk to him now and he will listen, if he can still hear.

After five nights behind that bar, it was on a Sunday and I had Monday off, I figured as long as I'm reeling and forgetting and surly like a drunk I might as well get into the candy. After a couple of drinks the people seemed nicer and my legs got some snap and I bit into the candy hard. I put all my personal cash in the tip cup so it made a glorious salad, to encourage out the reluctant dollars from the other side of the bar. The lieutenant in charge of me saw all the money, and he went to my register. In the infantry they tell you that rifle is your wife. Sleep with it. Never let it out of your sight. To a bartender, a professional, that is, the register is his rifle, his wife. Nobody touches it. I say this by way of explanation for what follows.

The lieutenant rings out my register, and for all the people in the joint, there isn't much business recorded. On the tape, I mean. I say, "I thought it was more." He makes a face. A pause. "A lot of customers don't like a bartender drinks behind the bar," he tells me. "You know what I mean?" I looked in the mirror behind the register. My face looked handsome as ever and younger than I am by ten years. The work keeps you young. But the face was scalded. Many flags unfurl'd. Alderman Bob. "The customers are paying good money to drink and you're drinking free. You know what I mean?"

It was a good point. I said, "Next time you want

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to read my register, tell me. I'll ring it out for you." He looked at the tip cup, then down and away. My days were numbered. Without saying anything, he took the ring-out slip and lumbered down the bar. Wide bottom in slack pants, Bostonian loafers, a string or thick thread hanging from the vent of a wash-and-wear jacket, plaid. I told myself to be careful. You need the rent now, or bail.

You leave New York you get to miss fags. They are marvelous company. I have always felt sure enough of myself to enjoy them. There are as many homosexuals per capita in Gloucester as anywhere else in the world, I suppose, but they are mostly in closets. This guy was long out of the closet. He delivered stories and one-liners with an only slightly girlish hesitancy that I found very funny. We got to drinking together as the crowd thinned out, me drinking the sticky stuff with an occasional scotch rocks to clear my throat. Toward closing, a stunning woman with gray hair joined the fag and I set to lusting for her, knowing after all these years slinging booze that if she were interested in sex she would not be with a man who was not. Lusting anyway. Real late, and kind of posturing if the truth be known, I tried to establish the woman's whereabouts. Not her address or telephone number. That would have been rude and direct, and I am neither. I don't know what the hell exactly I asked her, but it was a mistake and she let me have it like a cool lady. "I don't understand," she said. "You want to know where I live?"

"Oh, no. I just wondered if you came here often."

"That's not what you asked. I've never been here before that I can recall." She turned to the fag, who was looking at me like he just discovered I was a dope, or drunk, or both. He paid and they left.

It was a mistake and I know it. But she was worth the try. Bartenders are attractive to women who go to bars, for reasons I have never completely understood. Either this woman was not a bar person, or I am past the age when a bartender is attractive. One way or another, she shut me cold, like the blinds on a liquor store on Sunday. Hi-ho, I explained, and had a scotch to clear my throat. Only a few minutes to go and the place emptying out. I had another scotch and served Last Call.

Then the kid was there, the lieutenant, at my register. I could feel the blood in my forehead and cheekbones. Just as I, so help me God, was about to turn away and ignore him, I remembered there are want ads. There are other gigs. I went to the register. The lieutenant had rung it out and was staring at the tape, doing "I don't believe my eyes." I said, "I told you I'd ring out the register for you. Anytime."

"One-sixty-two-forty!" he said. "What happened?"

"That's all the business I did." It was.

He looked at the tip cup, which as I've said I had turned into a salad with my own greens. "I see," he said.

It was not at all like hitting somebody. It was like him and my left hand had an appointment. I didn't even look. Just hit him a fine straight left at the joining of the jaw. If I had thought about it, I would have hit him with my right hand. I'm very strongly right-handed. He went down on the linoleum over concrete floor, and now he knows how hard it is, anyway, and I started pouring lemon juice and whatever came to hand over him, singing, "Wake up, wake up, you sleepyhead. Get up, get up, get out of bed." I don't have a mean bone, but that's like me. I have to compound my mistakes. I can't just let them lie there in the error column.

I kept my daughter home from school Monday to answer the phone and the door. My wife works now. The daughter likes school very much, so it was doing me a favor to stay home. The only call that came all day I answered without thinking. It was a young chef at the saloon that I let work behind the bar with me sometimes to learn the business. It's a good traveling trade. He said the lieutenant's jaw was wired shut and my check was in the mail, don't come around for it or they'll sign a complaint.

"Imagine," I said to my daughter after I hung up, "I hit somebody and broke something besides my hand." She almost smiled. In the world she plans to go into, people don't hit people. I can see in her face that she will marry young. "I don't know how his jaw got broken." I laughed, compounding my mistake. "I didn't kick him, and the only thing I did with bottles was empty them on him."

"What about school?"

"Of course. You can go tomorrow. Nobody signed a complaint against me, so if I stay away . . ." she got up and walked toward her room "... there won't be any police trouble." She went into her room and shut the door. I wanted to yell after her, "It is all for you! You're the point of all this! I could skip!" But I didn't yell, because her understanding would be no help, and because it is probably a lie.

It's funny about the police coming, though. As the work gets tougher and the face in the bar mirror looks more scalded, and maybe the rent is due and I have some checks to make good, I think less and less unkindly about jail. Three hots and a flop. Loose, comfortable clothes. Friends to talk to. Life could be worse, and often is. Let the cops come. □

The Professor Waking

by James Tate

I am surprised to find today
I am no longer a child.
Waking a moment ago,
I expected to see my small
blue trousers waiting for me

on the hamper, to hear the voices
of Susan and Johnny outside
urging me to hurry. Where
have I been these fifty years?
I am not a proud keeper

of bees with a wealth of honey.
I have had no time to think,
to learn, to grow: the wild yearning
to be other than what I was
or am sends me floundering

forward, without real laughter
or tears. It is always the great
opportunity, the position,
the money that destroys the child
left in us and creates adult

fears. So now I have a decent
name and two months in sunny
Italy — then it's back to the blue
books and cold winds of Blabber-
mouth University. Whatever

happened to the mild boy named
Tommy, whom all the school loved?
Too many beers would have been
a better ending, a bulbous
red runny nose giving off

a bit of light for the bums
and queers as I wander home
at 5 A.M. through the Bowery.
Or I could have died in Veracruz
of syphilis, beguiled by

a fourteen-year-old prostitute.
It is almost funny: Chairman
of the Department, a Deacon.
Next, the City Council! I am
Dean of Crime and Cultural Trends!

I can get you a good job in Zagreb
or South Bend. So who the hell
was Tommy? What was so real
about him! If they ask me to run
for President, I might give in!

IN SEARCH OF NAN PAGE

by Barbara H. Kevles

The subject of this portrait is a Manhattan movie director; the name is fictitious.

"Why would you consent to be the subject of my article?"
—Barbara Kevles

"Because I think I can learn something."
—Anonymous

I

Sunday, July. Nan Page follows the Kentucky horse buyers and the other passengers out of the plane into the yellow mist that clings to Newark Airport. The blue scarf capping her hair and the dangling gold-coin earrings give her face the mask of a Creole Gypsy. She is toting all the original film footage and audio tapes from her first twenty-minute feature, divided between three valises plus a shoulder bag. A few steps past the electric-blue Eastern waiting room, the film cans in her left hand become so heavy, she must lean to that side as she walks, swinging the roped cans, left foot forward, left hand forward, step. A friendly baggage-man passing with a flat truck. Charm. He is persuaded to go beyond regulations and ferry her luggage to the Manhattan-bound bus. He detours. Repeat the destination. Yes, but he wants to weigh those cases she was carrying. Weigh them, what for? But he does, and the needle climbs to fifty pounds. "Yawww SUPERRR—woman!" he says.

She gives her home address to the taximan parked in front of the Forty-second Street bus terminal. Called everybody I didn't use in the film. Yes. Reached them all. Sister will bring my clothes Thursday on her way. Maid comes Monday. No underwear till then . . . What did Jenny say yester-

day on location that was so amusing? Oh, yes. I want to take a Ph.D. so I can be a campus radical as long as I can. Putting me down for telling Wade to defend her in the caucus scene. "See, Nan, you're stuck on the inferior-woman thing. I can defend myself." S***! I'm not nearly as far out as Jenny is.

The taxi doors rattle all the way to her Greenwich Village block, an oasis of well-kept brownstones bundled away between Sixth and Seventh Avenue and MacDougal Street. Nan opens the iron gate and manages her luggage up the high Victorian stoop. Which key unlocks the front door? Only three weeks? It seems longer.

Suitcases stowed in the middle room on the zebra rug, she inspects everywhere, running her hands over the elegant Bloomingdale blue-red couch that lends the formality of a Kentucky homestead to the living room. The plants on the windowsill are alive! Retracking past the front door to her large bedroom, touching the Indian paisley fabric behind the bed, drumming her nails on furniture in every room, proving she is home again, in her own floor-through.

The answering service tells her, since the morning only one call. Paul Elliot is away on location shooting. "No other messages, Miss Page."

Mail. From a living-room wing chair, she drops the magazines onto the rug, searching through the ads, and bills, for her second installment on the grant from the American Film Institute. Her backers for the featurette. The check. It is less than I asked for.

She slumps back into the chair, remembering the bills outstanding from her last film, what she owes the government in taxes, the loan from her father. I'm really extravagant; I have to be careful. Clothes, pulling back there a lot. Hair, once in

three months, only to have it cut, rarely styled. Do I need \$70 weekly out-of-pocket expenses? What to leave out? Maid? Taxis? Reduce food? Laundry? Plus \$80 for the shrink and \$100 toward rent, telephone, answering service. I need \$250 clear, after taxes, a week. She bolts upright. I'm locked into debt: I have to go deeper into debt to finish the Kentucky film. I could really blow my life. What am I getting myself into? What for? For whose approval?

She rises from the wing chair and walks haltingly toward the bathroom to freshen her makeup, powder over self-doubts to get that shot of identity from her own reflection. She brushes on some taupe eye shadow to widen her eyes, which taper off in a Kennedy downward slope. Checks her eye liner. No need for repair. Between her large, pointed nose—the proud family trademark for over a hundred years—and a tiny cucumber of a mouth, she applies only a little blush-on rouge and then some powder, secure enough in her looks at thirty-one not to use more makeup and aware enough to know that other women who spend more time in front of the mirror get no further than she.

The foyer mailbox produces nothing more. Jesus! Why are they holding up the money? The light bulbs of the Maritime Union's clock on Seventh Avenue sputter 11:06 as a green truck labeled "New York Times" speeds past. The old sights of shop after shop welcome her back. A new one? No, Saturday's Child moved. Before a corner café, a homosexual slides toward another leaning against a car and kisses him. She stares at the fish tank in the window of a seafood restaurant. Where will my pleasures come from? Who will ask me to the Hampton's? Nobody. Oh, yeh, the guy on West Seventy-second Street has a built-in tank of exotic fish. I could get stoned in front of that living-light show.

* * *

Monday. The reception desk at Leacock-Pennebaker is unmanned, but the wall-size bulletin board facing the elevator bombards her with the stares from famous/beautiful people photographed in company films—Bob Dylan, Janis Joplin, Norman Mailer, Jack Kennedy, Bob Kennedy, Godard. The pictures are part of cinema-verité film-making's Hall of Fame.

Rickie Leacock's office door is closed. Rather than interrupt, Nan wanders down the hall, looking into the tight-airless editing rooms she knows so well, where the line between artist and technician is so slim, egos get chewed up like film caught in the projector's teeth. But in the insulation of such rooms, Nan developed far beyond the possibilities offered women meshed in 9-to-5 office patterns.

The author is a Bryn Mawr graduate and a New York-based free-lance writer. The article is part of a book in progress.

Jean-Louis in Paris stimulated her interest in film. Rickie gave her the opportunities—prodded her to leave the editing rooms and take sound on location, hired her for her first stint as associate producer on a major hour-length network documentary, shot for free her first film on which she risked borrowed money and nights and weekends to be rewarded with applause at the Museum of Modern Art screening, a place in the Lincoln Center Film Festival. In effect, an East Coast Oscar, the chance to produce a film for a major industry, a real coup in a ruthlessly competitive field where the lack of talent results in the drying up of funds, then the AFI grant. The door still shut, but when it opens, Rickie and Nan grab each other and hug like two old friends who have no secrets.

Conferring in Rickie's office, Nan leans forward, her elbows propped on his desk. He tells her how the company who commissioned her first industrial wants to work through their ad agency for television commercials and how the advertising agency mistakenly phoned him about the project. He goes on in a dark mood, dubbing cinema-verité shooting a bloody "fishing expedition" with no guarantee on results. Rickie promises to set up a meeting with the agency. Nan muses. If I get the commercials, I'll get out of debt. Groovy! In fact, I'll be rich.

* * *

Nan pushes away her empty plates in La Crêpe, on West Forty-fourth Street. She drops her hand into her black handbag, and after foraging a few seconds, draws out the tiny daily calendar she did not use in Kentucky. She writes, "Monday, July 14, Call Cynthia again." Amazing. Sometimes you have to call friends three times to get through to them, and close friends at that. New York, New York, it's a wonderful town . . . "Call Harry for advice about budget." Must do that this afternoon. Agency meeting tomorrow. Have I got everything? She draws a pack of blue 3" x 5" cards from her bag and checks her calendar against hastily made phone notations. The last card, "Interview with Marilyn Bender, NEW YORK TIMES, 7/14, 2:30." I forgot. I almost forgot. 2:20. A mirror. Lipstick. Change for a tip. Blue scraps of torn paper cards beside her napkin. Never mind. And she leaves, rushing in the direction of West Forty-third Street and Seventh Avenue, shredding through the crowds instinctively. The great *Times* bulb lights—the suspended lampposts jutting over the sidewalk. Almost there. Oh, I'm running. I'm back in New York, and I'm running. Damn it!

Tuesday. The cab lets her off in front of a Sixth Avenue skyscraper still under construction. Is it the right address? Windows wear taped X's that in other parts of the city mean a building is condemned to be razed. Workmen in hard hats plod in and out of the glass doors. Over the makeshift

bridges inches above Manhattan mud float pantyhosed legs and men in self-effacing suits. I guess so. In the elevator, nervously, she pulls down the belt of her black Pucci, smoothing the skirt which, until last night, had been curled like lettuce leaves inside her handbag. Why did they call Rickie? Who else is bidding?

"We want to do a film about various company jobs, selling them to potential employees. The theme is 'You do your thing.' We were impressed by your last film and want to do the commercials in your style." So relieved. Nan slides down several inches in her seat, her face wreathed in a smile. As they move to the budget discussion, she digs out her 3" x 5" cards. The persistent hammering makes his questions hard to hear. Nan sits way back in her chair; it is a covertly offensive gesture. Who would do the camera work? Rickie, if he were free. A detour about her accent. Kentucky. His wife's family from Kentucky. Nan drives an advertisement for herself, with a lunge soft as hush puppies, for she couldn't be brazen if she tried.

He's interested in funny stories, taped some interviews for research in New Jersey. Nan does not eliminate his idea. Rather she says, "We'll go out looking for the spontaneous and extraordinary, but if we can't get that, we will cover ourselves with interviews and footage that can work with *voice-over* material." Her soft approach; it works. And then she waits. The feminine posture bred into her too deeply to give up. In the silence, the fact she wants slips out: "We have asked other people to bid, but we're considering you the prime contender."

The elevator doors shut, and Nan slumps against a wall. Just in time. I came back to New York just in time. The commercials could pay my bills. But they could do me in. How many friends have been put out of business because they've had to waste four weeks shooting the foam of beer spewing from a glass to the satisfaction of some finicky executive. Jesus, how I hate debt!

II

Friday, May. Kentucky. The Lexington airport. There's Michael. She waves. And he waves back, his turquoise bracelet snapping up the sunlight. And the blue-suited man beside him looks up and his stare follows the wave. The crowd makes its way through the fence entrance with Southern slowness. Nan keeps sight of Michael's brown suede jacket. They hug. He missed me. Oh, I'm glad he's here. Michael leans back, still holding her, "I should be filming *this*." Another hug and kiss, and he says, "Now if we can take this energy and bend it, we can work twenty-four hours a day."

As he disappears toward the parking lot, gingerly making his way through the parade of visitors being met by native Kentuckians (who sport their

guns, quite casually, on hand-tooled gunbelts), Nan senses the filming this weekend will be a total disaster. I don't want to work. Oh, those fees even at Michael's lowest price. All the equipment alone—camera, magazines, tape recorder—costing me \$100 a day. I don't want to think about it. No, I must go through the motions.

* * *

Ahead a Georgian house with pillar porch. Nothing my parents could do would embarrass me. Will they bore Michael?

They enter, like family, through the back door. Inside, Nan falls into a deep Southern accent. Her mother greets them, legs and arms brown and firm from gardening, features like her daughter's, more salt than pepper in her hair. Mr. Page shakes Michael's hand. A lawyer's handshake, tempered, for the low-paying and high-fee clients alike. Average height, gray-blond circling his crown. Why Nan's accent? Never get their approval without coming home sweet home, forever. And the grandmother, a clear-eyed ninety-three, proves a crack storyteller as Nan retreats to the pantry to fix drinks.

A few minutes. Her father comes in. "Your friend is sitting in my chair, and he's only been here five minutes." Placate him. He might embarrass you. He's jealous.

Michael finds dinner Faulkneresque. Double staircase, wisteria, lilacs netting the air with perfume. Silver water glasses with scrolled initials. Homemade corn bread. Country smoked ham. Mrs. Page narrating how Mr. Page shot the quail last fall and who was there. She invites Michael to too many helpings.

Mama's really knocked herself out for dinner. I love what she's chosen. Built-in jokes, horse jokes, home-farmed gossip. Why didn't father give me my phone messages? The people who call his office expect him to tell me. He just can't treat me as a professional. Too bad. He's got a groovy daughter, and he's suffering because she's not a virgin.

Michael fidgets in his chair. Mrs. Page is making me nervous. Ask another horse question. Don't let her know. She has that pained look in her eyes that "It's bad enough Nan isn't married, but does she have to work in films." Bet she'd be delighted if her daughter would come home and be her little girl again. They haven't asked about the film all night. They don't care.

Riding home, crickets regular as a humming air conditioner, Michael mentions this to Nan. She is silent. Then she lets him know she's not surprised. Last fall in New York, Paul Elliot dining out with the family said, "Isn't it terrific Nan's film will be shown next week at the New York Film Festival?" Nothing. They said nothing.

The kidney pool by the motel's front office is dimly lit when they arrive. She and Michael say good night and go inside their rooms. All very dis-

creet. Just like in Paris. Her parents had never known about her little protest, her private sexual revolution—the offering up of her virginity as a safeguard against marrying the kind of man who believed in purity until the wedding night, the kind of man who would stash her away, like an ornament, as a housewife in a rich suburb, the fate of so many of her St. Catherine classmates. No fifties Southern flower thinker for her. But this is Kentucky, and her parents live less than a half hour away, and she has school friends dating back to first grade here and relatives and townspeople she knows. And this is the first time she has come to Kentucky and not stayed with her parents. And when she opens the door adjoining Michael's room to hers, she knows exactly what she is doing. Her protest against her small-town Southern upbringing is now public knowledge.

III

Friday. July. New York. Her living-room windows, pushed up, mini-hems against the night. Blast of The Who cascading out of the stereo. Top decibels, the privilege of Village living. The French diplomat who knows Jean-Louis pelts her with compliments. Each visit stateside, he expects her to be transformed into the tough career woman. Why not? Will she wear a long calico dress if he buys it, show him how they looked in Kentucky a century ago? The compliments: what does he expect? That I'm a loose woman and he's a weekend bachelor in the Village? Oh, he's just being French. Don't get upright.

News of mutual friends in Paris. And Jean-Louis? He's married a rich girl. He doesn't love his wife, it's very clear. To a rich girl? We were to be married at *city hall*. And he thought wedding invitations were bourgeois.

When she had met Jean-Louis her junior year abroad, he had been a revolutionary. An intellectual, demanding any woman he married have as many academic degrees as he. So she had returned to Paris to obtain a master's degree. Then to New York the year he was drafted into the Algerian bush. A beginning in films. By fluke, becoming Harry's apprentice, and then living with him, on and off. A year. Harry let her take a film job returning her to Paris, without protest. Jean-Louis on a two-week furlough. Harry calling at 3 A.M. No privacy to take the calls anywhere except under the bed. She and Jean-Louis deciding to marry. His needing government permission as a soldier to marry an alien. A five-month wait. She lost her nerve. All her baggage marked for Harry's apartment. She stayed only a week.

Nan resists the diplomat's querying eyes and goes to the kitchen to refill his glass. What to say?

He smiles. Subtle probes. Without contriving, he nurtures trust, works as she did directing a scene to

be filmed—question and comments peripheral to the primary emotion and then the heavy question. "Why didn't you marry Jean-Louis?"

She confides, "I never had a certain stick-to-it-iveness a lot of girls do. They think they can change a person. Compromise. I never could. I would accept . . . a relationship till a certain point, then . . . I'm terrified of being dependent."

"Jean-Louis is my friend, but he is very bourgeois," the word *bourgeois* resounding with contempt.

"But when Jean-Louis and I met, *I* was the one who was *bourgeois*."

Later, she hammers shut the window locks with tiny knocks, thinking, burying once more a long-dead alternative.

* * *

Saturday. A menacing figure coming toward her. She screams. Darkness. Faint light in her bedroom. The memory of the scream wraps tightly as a winding sheet around her. Did *I* scream out loud? No, there it is again. And sobs, and the scream again. She shuffles out of bed and to the window. Four people, no, there's a couple at their window. Six. Where is it coming from? Woman in the patio across the yard points two stories up. "Don't worry. It happens every Saturday morning." I've never heard it. Nan gets the address. Dials the police. They take down the information and promise to investigate.

She covers herself with the sheet. Chilly. Turns over. Changes her position. Still awake. Pushes the pillow to the other side of the king-size bed. Vulnerable time of day. Monday-Friday pressures usually push her out of bed and out of the house. Today no appointment, no important phone call. This is incredible. I'm not living with anyone.

So the recriminations, the remorse, the jetsam from former selves. Why *aren't* I living with someone? Why don't people call me? *I'm* always the one calling *them*. Do I have to initiate things *all the time*? No man there to make love to her properly, to tell her she is the prettiest Southern belle, for him a woman first, film-maker second, and with his body joined with hers, like two half shells, shut out the shark-toothed question baited by loneliness in a large bed at dawn, what is my life about? WHAT IS MY LIFE ABOUT?

Harry and I talked of getting married. What did that little actress say the other night? The theater director invited his wife to the opening, but sat with his girlfriend in the balcony. Sounds like him.

What I loved about you most when I met you was you were doing your thing and I feel I've destroyed that.

Every guy since then, cut me to the core . . . feeling of not being feminine when I work, feel rejected and that I will be rejected . . .

I'm twenty-seven and not married. If I want to be a film editor, I've got to pull myself together and become a professional, a producer—I'm making the choice in life which could deny my whole sexual identity. So lonely. Sleep with anyone who will have me. Two times with that Boston lawyer and I can't work. I keep imagining I'll marry him, make films and be the belle of Boston. I'm reacting to my fantasies, but what can I do, I'm so alone.

The Shrink—"You're wasting your time. Spend your time looking for SOMEONE."

No, I've got to hustle for my happiness. Drop her.

"I'm not his younger sister, I'm older."

"How old are you?"

"I'm twenty-three."

"He's that young, my god!"

Shooting my own movie. Editing nights and weekends. When I'm working hard, I don't feel attractive. This society makes you believe for a woman to work to be successful is very unfeminine. Women who do are monsters.

"Would you take the laundry?"

"Well, why?"

"How else would you show your love?"

They're applauding . . . they're applauding my film at the Museum of Modern Art. People really like it. Well, I must have talent . . . I've just got a grant . . . I've just got a grant from the American Film Institute. I feel . . . my life is justified. Sleep.

* * *

What time. Ten to ten. Her spindly model legs reach for the floor. Steps into a pair of underpants, hooks a black no-bra. From the tall closet beside her bed takes the hanger out with her gray hip-huggers. A blue shirt. The gypsy earrings from the bureau top. Did I lose my Diorissimo? Must remember to buy another bottle next time uptown. Tries a long, thin strand of hippie beads. One loop won't do. Doubles the strand, one loop close to her neck and one low, twenties' style. She steps carefully over the bills and checks, laid out like a game of solitaire, to get to the door. Mostly business bills, personal ones still wait.

Half-empty glasses on the white table by the living-room couch. Ashtrays littered. She gathers an armload. Into the kitchen, the size of a butler's pantry. Glasses covering the top of the ranch brown kitchen stove. Someone playing WQXR on his radio. Usual baroque serenade. Into the bedroom again for Yoga. Turns on radio and rolls out a blanket on the floor before she stands on her head.

. . . filed suit against Hayakawa . . . Nigerians . . . weather story . . . rain likely . . . humidity, 82 percent . . . Again the top story. Governor Rockefeller says no to Mayor Lindsay's request for State Aid to keep bus and subway fare 20 cents. Monitor 69. Live it up and let's go. Playing Friends of Distinction.

All waked up. In the bathroom, takes a birth-control pill and then scans her forehead to see if the brown rash from the pills has grown or receded slightly. Yawns.

Do I want breakfast? Yes. Opens Frigidaire. I hate dishes. Ties on an old-fashioned yellow apron with high bib and starts sponging the Williamsburg cocktail glasses in the soapsuds.

Bacon, toast, tea, liquidy scrambled eggs into the living room, she sets the plates down by her phone table stationed by the white director's chair and front windows. Puts tiebacks on curtains, sun rushes in. Apron still on, towel over shoulder, takes off the turntable the new Beatles record and pushes "reject" on the player. Clearwater Revival. Funk rock on the disc, a white boy with a tan voice. Green tree leaves flood her window. Deep breaths, long deep breaths.

Favorite record. She listens to the funk . . . funk . . . funk . . . beat and leans back, balancing her plate on a knee, watches the fountain play of sunlight streaming through the white, billowing curtains. Index finger to mouth. Feel so relaxed. Finger combing her shoulder-length hair, pushing it back, out of her eyes. I have all day to do my errands. Hands hanging limply on the armrests of the director's chair. If that tree outside my window dies, I'd spend \$100 to plant another one. It'd be worth it. Phone rings.

"Hi, Tom. No, I haven't got the *Times*. I'm not really awake yet. Oh, God, there're just tons of things I'd like to see. Have you seen it?" She giggles. "What? I'd like to see that. I hate Pasolini, too. OK. That and then *Dionysus '69*."

And hangs up. She glances at the drawing over her couch: a screaming woman. At this hour, the portrait does not upset her.

In the sunlit room, she stumbles upon an answer, a rationale. I have totally changed myself in ten years. If I hadn't had affairs, I wouldn't have learned as much . . . I kept meeting men whose lifestyle I liked. Then once I absorbed their thing, I wanted to go further. And, she realizes ruefully, they weren't ready.

* * *

Monday. Twenty minutes past the time of her doctor's appointment. The pain is low. Not abdominal. Can't be appendicitis. Why do I think everything is that? On the wall, a blowup of a home snapshot of Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward cupping a new baby between them. Autographed thanks from Judy Garland, more from Nelson Rockefeller. I'll bet Happy Rockefeller wasn't kept

CHEVY'S NEW LITTLE CAR: IF YOU LIKE THE 1971, YOU'LL LIKE THE 1975.

If you've been with us for the past few weeks, you know we're ready with our own little car, the Vega 2300. Almost.

But first, there are a few things we've been meaning to talk to you about.

No shiny new ashtray knobs.

Before we tell you anything about the car itself, we think you should know that once it comes out, it's going to stay out. We don't plan to change it for at least four years.

We've got it just the way we want it, and we think you'll like it.

Of course, there is the possibility that we'll find ways to improve Vega from a functional standpoint. If we do, we will. We'll make you a promise, though: no change for the sake of change.

So, when you see the 1971 Vega, you'll be getting a preview of Vegas to come. That's how confident we are. Here's why.

Little, but big.

To be perfectly honest, we're pretty proud. Our little car is unlike any other little car.

For one thing, it is

indeed little: it's on a tight 97-inch wheelbase, and it's built for four passengers. Yet it feels bigger, because there's as much room per passenger as there is in many big cars.

There are other things that make our Vega a lot of little car, like its zippy performance, its quiet ride, and even its taut, smooth handling. In fact, our little car is more than just maneuverable—it's plain old fun.

Naturally, all of these things are ads in themselves, so stay tuned to this magazine.

Little, but little.

Although our little car feels and acts like a much bigger car, there are times when its littleness really shines.

Like when you pull into a gas station. We aren't ready with final figures yet, but we can say this much: Vega will get gas mileage in the same neighborhood as the best of the economy cars. And that's a pretty good neighborhood.

Our little Vega will also seem very little when you go to buy it: prices will be very close to ordinary little cars'.



MARK OF EXCELLENCE



waiting. The buzzer. The door to the doctor's offices tentatively opens. The nurse.

Nan asks how long. Half an hour. She'll be in Central Park for a while. Outside. Glimpses her reflection in the office window. Sibley—Coffee custom-made dark brown pants suit, belted jacket over high-collared Gypsy blouse. No more East-sider elegance. I want to look hippie. She turns and takes one more look. Elegance puts me off. And with the green light, heads across the street, unbuttoning her jacket in the noon warmth. I want money, but not money that signifies I've got money.

Nanny parades past with a baby carriage covered with white lace, thin as gauze. That poor girl with infected tubes. She couldn't have children. Ask the doctor to check you over thoroughly. A child wouldn't hurt my career, not in my field. She sits down on a park bench. How desperate do you have to be to go into a delivery room alone? It would be more fun to have a child with the man I love. How much longer can I wait? I'd refuse to go through menopause without having children. It's the ultimate thing to prove I'm a woman. How much longer till I find someone to live with?

Blue shirt open at the neck under his examining gown, the doctor assures Nan she's fine, her fallopian tubes are not in any way infected, she could conceive today if she wanted to. The pills he's prescribed will relieve the burning from the cystitis in a day or two.

* * *

Her apartment phone. It is Harry returning her call to talk about the producing fees she plans to ask at Tuesday's meeting. How did he bill for his commercials? He offers figures for equipment, time, contingency. Figures becoming more familiar to her each day. Nearly talked dry. He's split with his present girlfriend. She nearly blurts out a thought submerged by weeks and weeks of grueling work in another state, will you give me a baby, do you want to have a child with me?

The thought sticks in her throat like a chicken bone.

IV

Monday evening. Michael's answering service informs her. "No, he's in town; I've talked to him a lot today." She replaces the receiver. Where is he? Those people are waiting for us at the steak house and I can't even reach him. She feels humiliated and helpless. She sits on the couch, slouching into its back cushions. He couldn't do this to me. Why can't I reach him? Business conference? But a two-minute call? Unexpected filming? Errands. Why can't he take a dime and tell me where he is and how late he'll be?

She dials. Waits. Dials again. At last, he answers. "What? Call . . . oh, yeh." Voice groggy, as if he's

rising from a deep sleep. He is, and tries to apologize. Very busy day. Three people who said "urgent" in their messages and he hasn't phoned them because . . .

"Don't explain on the telephone," anger swirling like a dust storm. "I want you here!"

* * *

The big scene to cut her director's teeth on. Twenty kids to control in a classroom, a teacher, too. Screams from the hall. The blast of fire-crackers. The teacher, "School is in session till 3 o'clock. Don't sign your yearbooks till you get into the hallway." Good, repression. Michael wants a conference. Stop. Redo the scene for close-ups. No, Godard hardly does *any* retakes. Jump cuts, no transitions. I won't be sorry later. Manual of how I want to work. Authority stated.

Michael backs down. Wanted to help. Accustomed to agency executives who learned film-making in \$3.50 seats at East Side movies. Nan, superior editing room background. Shooting style OK with him.

He watches her the rest of the day. She's low-key, even philosophical when a supermarket manager gets a bad case of stepped-on ego, reneges on his superior's permission. They can't shoot at his market. An hour later, they are filming, cast of eighteen, at another branch. Nan didn't fall apart, no indecisiveness, cool. Not the passive female. Assertive, for Michael, more magnetic, his American Julie Christie with a style all her own.

* * *

Fifteen minutes later. The bell. A newborn smile on her face. Ten minutes go by. Michael gulps, "Let's get your anger all out, OK."

"Yeh, I'm mad," beaming. So delighted to see him. Unwilling to stir up the storm of anger. Ready to call two millimicroseconds of dust lash enough!

Michael, relieved that Nan the producer is Nan the woman, and that Nan the woman is Nan the producer.

Instead of thumbing a taxi, she heads first for the bank. A hippie whistles. A truck driver stops and gawks at the girl in sheer navy polka dot dress. A guy in a frayed World War I Army jacket stops and offers an obscene invitation. She smiles and moves on, feeling quite satisfied this morning, and untempted.

* * *

She stands in front of one desk along a carpeted corridor. Neither the secretary nor her boss is there to receive the films. Waiting, she crosses to the boss's office and stands before the window framing a view encompassing all of Central Park, as breathtaking as a Veuillard painting. A view like this every day could change your life. A sputtering be-

hind her. The secretary. Hair teased out toward the Empire State. Nan reviews the call for the films for the screening, she'll pick them up . . . "Good," says the secretary. "I'll tell him the film will be picked up by Mr. Page's secretary."

Nan says, "I'm sorry to tell you, *I am MISS PAGE!*" Leaves without another word. Outside, the blare of midmorning traffic on Sixth Avenue. It's a shame those girls are so brainwashed they think all women are secretaries or tough thirty-five-year-old bitches. This is a man's world is all they ever see, and that girl will never try to be anything but a secretary. And that's why they interview me for the Women's Page, not the Entertainment section of the New York Times.

* * *

Rubber-ribbed carpets over the lobby floor of the agency's building. Construction men mingling with all levels of company hierarchies. Will they take it? Will they think the commercials overpriced?

The writer's office, this time. Writer, sideburns and neck scarf updating his college khakis. Is he a fifties or a sixties thinker? Through his window, across the street, on the roof, two boys with a balloon peering at the traffic below. A word-man, theater-oriented, wants dramatizations. Don't cross him. Nan doesn't argue, deflates his ideas, slowly, with questions. Writer relaxes and puts Chelsea boots on the desk as other executive watches performance from rear seat. He's a fifties thinker, precinema-verité. She suggests both methods—spontaneous and staged material. Finally, the request for the total dollars the commercials will cost.

When she gives the figures, they blink with astonishment and try a shredding technique—"No idea how many commercials the client finally wants . . . May not have that many weeks of editing time realistically." Nan is taking notes on blue cards. "We might take the footage out of the producer's hands and edit it ourselves."

Her Achilles' heel. "That would bother me because I'm a really good editor."

The boys let go of the balloon and the pretty colored dot climbs into the sky, going nowhere.

The two agency men judge that they have the upper hand.

But Nan, well prepared by her business manager, dodges their suggestions for an immediate budget reduction then and there: "I'm sorry; these figures were arrived at with a consultant and I'll have to relay your ideas to him and let him revise the figures before I can give you another definite total."

She has won the round. The writer reclines back in his chair and says, "Nan is no dummy."

Wednesday. She begins planning a dinner party, but not before she inspects her new editing rooms which she plans to decorate with film posters. Late last night, when she relayed the new figure for the

budget to the agency executive at his home, a figure barely lower than the first, the agency man said, "I think we can work with it."

Friday. Haven't had a dinner party for two or three months. Hope Michael's out-of-town shooting is canceled. Groovy if he can come. Oh, last time. She remembers people running up and down the apartment, quite stoned, as if they were on a basketball court. This time, no smoking before dinner.

Begins picking up underpants strewn around her bedroom. Picks up a pair of pink lace thirties ladies undershorts. Net no-bra. Bendel's should get a line of obscene underwear. Just the Bendel's label would make it socially acceptable. Clothes put away in the closets. Into the living room, straightening up. By the phone, a silver teaspoon etched with shell and leaf. From mother. Grandmother won't give me anything till I marry. Told her I have a house; I've set up housekeeping. And Nan muses about silver teaspoons and a tarnishing dowry. Jane Fonda told the camera, "I have a whole lot of baggage left over from my backyard that I have to bury, or remove." I do, too.

She props the iron up for a rest. Pauses to stare at her delicately slender fingers. When I was growing up, Mother would say, "You are inherently feminine. I can tell by your hands." Flattens the iron against the large sheet again, which is serving as tomorrow's tablecloth and the next day will puzzle the Chinese laundryman trying to decipher its spaghetti stains. Buy a tablecloth. No, I'm anti-elegance.

People coming from the supermarket. Lady wheeling a full cart. Girl entering with a full laundry bag on her shoulder. In the Village, I'm always comfortable. Turns the corner. Oh, I need chairs. And she scans the trash as she walks. Last time she found a chair, took it home, sprayed it, and used it the next night.

The pottery barn. Wineglasses upright on the shelf. She takes down the hollow stem champagne glasses. Who would want crystal today? Negro salesman. She writes a check and snaps shut her checkbook. An impish smile. "Phone number on the back, please." She doesn't move. "The bookkeeper wants them. I don't know what for." Salesman cooler returning her I.D.

Lugging chair in one hand, groceries and pocket-book in other, through the crowds, at last opening the gate, and home. Any messages?

"Yes, Miss Page, Michael says he regrets very much he can't come to your party because he has to go out of town on business."

Damn it. She slides into the director's chair by the phone, packages falling to the floor. She recalls the days she wasn't going with anyone, when she felt socially unpresentable, would not give a party or go to a movie alone. Not anymore. It would have been much more fun with Michael here, but

... and if she ever heard a Kentucky society lady criticize her, say, "Women don't give dinner parties when their men are away." "Women don't live alone, they get married and have babies and have security for their old age. Women don't have careers, and pay insurance for themselves," Nan would tell that lady to her face, "F*** you!" For through experience and introspection, Nan had become a lady who would warn her critics, very quietly, "F*** off!"

Sunday. My birthday. The sunlight. Beautiful. Wish I were in East Hampton. No, can't go. Too much work. What a drag. The phone. Her mother

calling as she does every year, to recount Nan's birth.

"Your grandmother took your older sister to the meadow across from the hospital and your sister rode her pony while I was laboring to bring you into the world." A new fact, I didn't know. "I had been given an anesthetic, but as soon as you were born, I came out of it. I heard you cry. You were all bloody, your eyes rolling. I was so excited. Whereas your father on hearing you were a girl got deathly ill and went into the hospital with appendicitis."

Rosebud.

A PROPHET AS THE TIME OF DAY

Terrible & swift as elephants
is a field of floating weeds where

the pear, a triangle

assumes us with symmetry, where
the excellent bird boats up
its voice a reed daring air
its wings a triangle
its beak belief

it stares primitive at pears
at the reeds
at the weeds

of the floating world
where we ask about each other's hands
where we ask each other's hands
what wood is, what kind of love
trees are

green candles like us small kings in grass.

The night is round like a zero like an unmade
sun
like a bomb like a bloom
like the pencil edges of brown owls
like the ears of children
& acorns
like shields.

The field is a shield,
the white bird has red eyes for night.
Be not impatient. The messenger comes
who brings no message. The bird burns
behind a triangle in the grass.

by Pamela Alexander

MURDER IN THE SCHOOLROOM

by Charles E. Silberman

Part Two

Some new hopes for life in the primary schools

What we call necessary institutions," Alexis de Tocqueville wrote, "are often no more than institutions to which we have grown accustomed." The "necessity" that makes American schooling so uniform over time and across cultures is simply the "necessity" that stems from unexamined assumptions and unquestioned behavior. The preoccupation with order and control, the slavish adherence to the timetable and lesson plan, the obsession with routine qua routine, the absence of noise and movement, the joylessness and repression, the universality of the formal lecture or teacher-dominated "discussion," in which the teacher instructs an entire class as a unit, the emphasis on the verbal and de-emphasis of the concrete, the inability of students to work on their own, the dichotomy between work and play—none of these is necessary, all can be eliminated.

Schools can be humane and still educate well. They can be genuinely concerned with gaiety and joy and individual growth and fulfillment without sacrificing concern for intellectual discipline and development. They can be simultaneously child-centered and subject- or knowledge-centered. They can stress aesthetic and moral education without weakening the three R's. They can do all these things if—but only if—their structure, content, and objectives are transformed.

These assertions represent a statement of fact, not a mere expression of hope. Schools of this sort exist in the United States on a small but rapidly growing scale; they exist on a much wider scale in England. Their rapid growth after World War II went largely unnoticed in this country, and to a sur-

prising degree, in England itself, until 1967, when a Parliamentary Commission, now referred to as the Plowden Committee, called attention to the new approach and urged its adoption by all English primary schools. The approach has a variety of labels, none of them entirely satisfactory: the "free day," the "integrated day," the "integrated curriculum," the "free school," the "open school," "informal education." The multiplicity of labels reflects the wide range of specific school practices and organization; there is no monolithic system or approach.

Indeed, the "free day," or "informal education," to use a more inclusive term, is less an approach or method than a set of shared attitudes and convictions about the nature of childhood, learning, and schooling. Advocates of informal education begin with a conception of childhood as something to be cherished, a conception that leads in turn to a concern with the quality of the school experience in its own right, not merely as preparation for later schooling, or for later life. As the members of the Plowden Committee state it in their report, "Children need to be themselves, to live with other children and with grownups, to learn from their environment, to enjoy the present, to get ready for the future, to create and to love, to learn to face adversity, to behave responsibly, in a word, to be human beings."

There is, in addition, a conviction that learning is likely to be more effective if it grows out of what interests the learner, rather than what interests the teacher. This is a truism to any adult: we *know* how rapidly we can learn something that really interests us, and how long it takes to master something which bores us, or for which we have a positive distaste. Formal schools, whether in England or the United States, tend to ignore the truism; informal schools do not. Hence they generally abandon the traditional rigid timetable which divides the day into a succession of short periods. In its place there are longer periods, during which, at the teacher's discretion and under his supervision, students may be engaged individually or in

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small groups in a wide variety of activities.

To suggest that learning evolves from the child's interests is not to propose an abdication of adult authority, only a change in the way it is exercised. "With our foolish and pedantic methods," Rousseau wrote, "we are always preventing children from learning what they could learn much better by themselves, while we neglect what we alone can teach them." Teachers in the informal English schools try to make this distinction, but they have no doubt about their responsibility to teach. "From the start," the Plowden Committee firmly declares, "there must be teaching as well as learning: children are not 'free' to develop interests or skills of which they have no knowledge. They must have guidance from their teachers." Since what children are interested in is a function of their environment as well as of their native endowment, it is the teacher's responsibility to structure that environment in the best possible way, and to help it change and grow in response to each child's evolving interests and needs.

What chiefly distinguishes the contemporary English informal schools, then, from the American child-centered progressive schools of the 1920s and 1930s, which they resemble in many ways, or from the kind of education that romantic critics like John Holt, George Dennison, and Paul Goodman now advocate is the absolute clarity of this understanding, the hardheaded recognition of and indeed insistence on the teacher's central role. With rare exceptions, the teachers and administrators with whom I talked and whose informal classrooms I observed were very much in charge.

The informal approach is widely used in state schools (what we call public schools) in every part of England, staffed by every kind of teacher in every kind of building and serving every kind of student. I observed informal schools in London—in one of the wealthiest neighborhoods, in one of the poorest and most crime-ridden Cockney slums, and in sev-

eral rapidly changing immigrant neighborhoods. I observed them, too, in the depressed coal mining towns of Yorkshire, in middle-class and lower-class neighborhoods in Leicestershire County in the industrial Midlands, and in pastoral (but increasingly industrialized) Oxfordshire. There are accounts of informal schools in such diverse places as Manchester, Bristol, and Nottingham. The buildings in which these "new" schools are housed also run the gamut from spanking-new one-story glass-enclosed buildings designed specifically for informal education to dark and dank three-story buildings erected in Queen Victoria's reign and designed for the most rigid formal schooling. The teachers and "heads" ranged from veterans of forty years of teaching to miniskirted young women fresh out of training school.

To enter a "free day" classroom for the first time is a disorienting experience for an American (or for that matter an Englishman) accustomed to traditional formal schooling. To begin with, the classroom does not *look* like a classroom. It is, rather, a workshop, in which "interest areas" take the place of the familiar rows of desks and chairs, and in which individualized learning takes the place of what informal English educators now disparagingly call "the talk and chalk" method—that is, the teacher conducting a lesson for all the children simultaneously from her vantage point at the blackboard.

The reading corner typically is an inviting place, with a rug on which children may sprawl, a couple of easy chairs or perhaps a cot or an old couch for additional comfort, and a large and tempting display of books at child's height. The arithmetic (or "maths," as the English call it) area most likely will have several tables pushed together to form a large working space. On the tables, in addition to a variety of math texts and workbooks, will be a box containing rulers, measuring tapes and sticks, yardsticks, string, and the like; other boxes, containing pebbles, shells, stones, rocks, acorns, conkers (the acorn of a chestnut tree), bottle tops, pine cones, and anything else that can be used for counting, along with more formal arithmetic and mathematical materials, such as Cuisenaire rods, Dienes blocks, Stern rods, and Unifisc cubes. There will be several balance scales, too, with boxes of weights, as well as more pebbles, stones, rocks, feathers, and anything else that can be used for weighing.

Near the maths area in an infant schoolroom, and frequently in the lower grades of a junior school, there is likely to be a large table-height sandbox and a specially constructed table for water play. The water table comes "equipped" with an assortment of empty milk cartons and bottles, plastic detergent bottles, pitchers, plastic containers and the like, all with their volume ($\frac{1}{2}$ pint, $\frac{1}{4}$ pint, quart, gallon)

marked on them, for practice in maths. There may also be an oven; following a recipe for muffins or cookies provides still another application of simple mathematical notions, along with practice in reading.

Nearby will be a table, or perhaps several cartons on the floor, some with blocks, Tinkertoys, and the like, some containing "junk" (so marked), that is, empty cereal and soap boxes, egg cartons, toilet-paper and paper-towel rollers, pieces of wood, scraps of wallpaper and fabric, oaktag, cigar boxes—anything children might use for constructing things (airplanes, trucks, cars, steamrollers, robots, spaceships, houses, office buildings, bridges), or for making collages or murals. Somewhere in the room, or perhaps in the hall outside, there will be some large easels, with jars of paint and large brushes. In one corner, or perhaps in a converted closet, will be a "Wendy House," a child-size playhouse, furnished with dolls, furniture, dishes, kitchenware, and a pile of cast-off adult clothing for children to dress up in.

To complete the general picture, and without allowing for the idiosyncratic arrangements that distinguish one teacher's classroom from another, even in the same school, there typically is a music area with xylophones, drums, cymbals, castanets, recorders, and other (sometimes homemade) instruments. There is a science area, too, with rocks and shells, leaves and other local flora, candles and jars, perhaps some small motors, batteries, bulbs, and wire, and in all probability, an animal or two or three, be it rabbit, turtle, hamster, or kitten. And this in classrooms which more often than not contain as many as forty children.

How do they find room? In good measure by replacing the desks and chairs with a smaller number of tables and chairs. There is no need to have a seat and desk for each child: the teacher seldom instructs the class as a whole, and when she does, the children simply gather around her, pulling up chairs or sitting on the floor. But teachers also create space for the various interest areas and activities by using closets, cloakrooms, and every conceivable nook and cranny, and by spilling over into the halls, lobbies, playgrounds, and other common space.

Indeed, a visitor accustomed only to formal classrooms is likely to be disoriented by the sound and movement of an informal classroom even more than by its physical arrangements. Always there is the sound of children talking—to themselves, to their friends, to the teacher, to the headmistress as she walks around, to the visitors from America, in sharp contrast to schools in the United States, or to formal classrooms in England, where children and visitors usually are carefully segregated from each other.

As the strangeness wears off, one becomes aware of many things. One becomes aware, for example, of the teacher's presence: the teacher seems always to be in contact with the children—talking, listen-

ing, watching, comforting, chiding, suggesting, encouraging—although from time to time she stops for a minute to jot down a comment in the record book she keeps for each child.

One becomes aware, too, of the sense of structure. For all the freedom the children enjoy, for all the ease and informality, for all the child-centeredness, there is no ambivalence about authority and no confusion about roles. And yet control is rarely harsh or punitive. An American visitor is struck, for example, by the atmosphere of civility that prevails; teachers are as polite to the children as they are to the visitors.

What impresses an American the most, however, is the combination of great joy and spontaneity and activity with equally great self-control and order. The joyfulness is pervasive: in almost every classroom visited, virtually every child seemed happy and engaged. One simply does not see bored or restless or unhappy youngsters, or youngsters with the glazed look so common in American schools.

Genius among teachers, John Dewey suggested some three quarters of a century ago, "is as rare as genius in other realms of human activity. Education is, and forever will be, in the hands of ordinary men and women." But can the ordinary men and women in whose hands American public education is placed successfully handle free day classrooms?

The approach already is in use in schools as diverse as those in New York's Harlem and the small cities, towns, and hamlets of North Dakota; in Philadelphia, and Tucson, and Washington, D. C.; in Cambridge, Massachusetts, Paterson, New Jersey, and San Antonio, Texas; in Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania, and Johnson County, North Carolina. In all of these, the programs now in operation appear to be working well.

One reason is that the free day does not depend on extraordinary talent or genius on the part of the teacher; teachers of every sort—ordinary, garden-variety teachers, not only superior ones—are able to function well in informal classrooms.

This is not to suggest that informal teaching is easy. No teaching is easy, and informal teaching makes demands on teachers that the conventional

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classroom does not. For example, it requires much more alertness. A teacher must always be "at the ready"—aware not only of what each child is doing at any moment, but of what stage of development the child is in. The intellectual and emotional demands seem relentless and unending, and teachers need to be informed about many more things. The curriculum is not limited to the teacher's lesson plan, but is as broad and unpredictable as the children's interests.

And yet teachers who have tried both approaches insist that informal teaching is no more difficult than formal teaching and is much more rewarding. For one thing, informal education relieves the teacher of the terrible burden of omniscience. In a traditional classroom, it is difficult—and threatening—for any but the most secure teacher to admit ignorance. Since the traditional classroom is organized on the assumption that the teacher is the source of all knowledge, and that learning is something the teacher makes happen to the student, many teachers fear that admitting ignorance may diminish their authority.

In an informal classroom, by contrast, the teacher is the facilitator rather than the source of learning, the source being the child himself. Learning is something the child makes happen to and for himself, albeit with the teacher's aid, and sometimes at her instigation. The consequence is an atmosphere in which everyone is learning together, and in which teachers therefore feel comfortable saying to children, "I'm awfully sorry, I don't know much about this. Let's go to the library and get a book, and we'll find out together," or "Let's set up an experiment together," or what have you. Because the classrooms are not self-contained, moreover—because the teachers are used to working with one another—they also feel free to direct a child to the principal or to another teacher who may be better informed on the subject in question. And since the whole school is their orbit, children feel free to go

to one teacher for help with science, another for help with art, still another for music, and so on, without losing respect for anyone. It is manifestly impossible for any one person to be an authority on everything that comes up in an open classroom.

Informal education also relieves the teacher of the obligation to try to teach the entire range of abilities at one time, a task that is as exhausting as it is futile. A typical third-grade class, for example, is likely to contain children whose reading ability ranges from nonexistent to fifth- or sixth-grade level; the spread is comparable in most other academic subjects. Of necessity, therefore, teachers in traditional classrooms tend to pitch their lessons at the middle, thereby boring the most advanced and losing those who are behind. The strain on the conscientious teacher is considerable.

Most important, however, the free day classroom relieves the teacher of the necessity of being a time-keeper, traffic cop, and disciplinarian. In a formal classroom, a large proportion of the teacher's time and an extraordinary amount of her energy are consumed simply by the need to maintain order and control. ("I cannot begin until the talking has stopped and every eye is on me!") In the informal classroom, the discipline problem withers away, in part because children are not required to sit still and be silent. The release of the teacher's energy is incalculable; she is free to devote all her time and energy to teaching itself. The result is a kind of professional satisfaction and reward that simply is not found in the average formal classroom.

One of the most interesting programs is in North Dakota, where elementary schools are gradually being remodeled along informal lines, under the aegis of the University of North Dakota's newly created New School for Behavioral Studies in Education. The change had its origins in a statewide study of North Dakota's educational problems, initiated by the state's Legislative Research Committee in 1965 and carried out by the committee, the North Dakota Department of Public Instruction, the University of North Dakota, the State Board of Higher Education, the United States Office of Education, and several local school districts.

The study turned up the fact, among others, that North Dakota ranked fiftieth among the states in the professional preparation of its elementary school teachers, with only two in five holding a college degree. The state ranked fiftieth, too, in the overall opportunities it provided for elementary schooling, with few children attending kindergarten, few remedial reading teachers, and no diagnosticians or teachers of the handicapped at all.

The state's prestige demanded that the elementary school teachers' lack of academic preparation be corrected. More than prestige was involved, however;



students taught by teachers without a college degree were achieving lower scores on standardized tests than students taught by college graduates. The result was a proposal to bring all the state's elementary school teachers up to standard by 1975. But the authorities vetoed what most cities and states have attempted in similar circumstances: a crash program designed simply to provide teachers with the desired credentials. There would be little value in sending experienced teachers back to college, they reasoned, unless they would become better teachers as a result of the experience.

But what is a better teacher? And how do you make one? How can a college program change—really change—the way people teach? To get their money's worth—to justify the costs inherent in bringing the state's experienced teachers back to the university—the North Dakotans had to face up to the ultimate questions about the nature and purpose of education. They decided that merely to train teachers to do what they had always done, only better, was inadequate to the special need the state now faced—the fact that children coming from small, stable, closed, laconic rural communities would be living their lives in a large, rapidly changing, open, and much more verbal society.

What this means in practice is that North Dakota children need much greater facility and ease with language (talking, reading, writing) than they now enjoy, better arithmetic and mathematical ability, and greater power of creative expression. (North Dakota children at present score well below national norms in standardized tests of achievement.) It also means broadening the children's horizons beyond their immediate Great Plains environment. And it means making them comfortable with themselves and with others, as well as with the process of change.

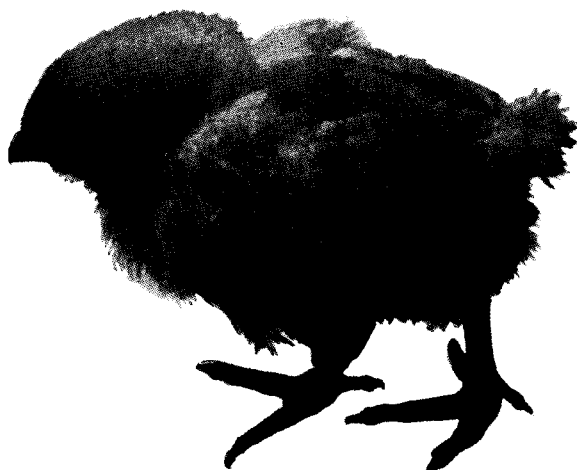
Although North Dakota is beginning to urbanize, it is still predominantly rural, with a population of 615,000 spread over 71,000 square miles. (By contrast, New York State has 17 million people living in 50,000 square miles.) As of the 1960 census, only

fifteen places in North Dakota had a population of 2500 or more. As a result, only 270 of the state's 400 operating school districts are large enough to afford a high school, and at least 100 districts operate a single one-, two-, or three-room schoolhouse. Except in the cities—the largest, Fargo, has a population of less than 52,000—most schools are so small that the conventional graded pattern of organization is uneconomic. Teachers may have to handle several grades simultaneously, therefore, and subject specialists, let alone curriculum supervisors, guidance personnel, remedial-reading teachers, or psychologists, simply are not available. The classroom teacher has to do, and be, everything.

The statewide study committee, therefore, looked for an approach that would be compatible with small, ungraded schools. They wanted an approach, too, that would permit some expansion in the student-teacher ratio (sending experienced teachers back to the university was going to be an expensive proposition), and that would permit some reduction in the number of formal curriculum objectives. The committee also hoped to find an approach that could be handled by the young master's degree candidates who would be taking over the classrooms while the experienced teachers were back at the university—ideally, an approach that might generate enough enthusiasm among the young people to hold them in the state, instead of their leaving after they had gotten their own certification.

By a happy coincidence, one of the members of the study group happened to read Joseph Featherstone's 1967 *New Republic* articles on the revolution in English primary schools, and also happened to see the relevance of the English informal approach to North Dakota's needs. The study group proposed, and North Dakota adopted, a far-reaching program to convert formal elementary classrooms into informal ones, in which individualized learning replaces most large-group instruction, with the teacher's role changed from "chalk and talk" teaching to that of "observing, stimulating, and assisting children in their learning."

The axis on which the program turns is a completely new program of teacher education and re-education developed by the University of North Dakota's New School of Behavioral Studies in Education, which was established in the spring of 1968. The university already had a conventional school of education; but it was felt that the kinds of sweeping changes that were envisaged could be more rapidly accomplished by creating a new institution to prepare teachers for informal teaching.



The New School enrolls regular University of North Dakota undergraduates in their junior year, in a three-year program leading to a master's degree; the school also enrolls experienced teachers, who return to the Grand

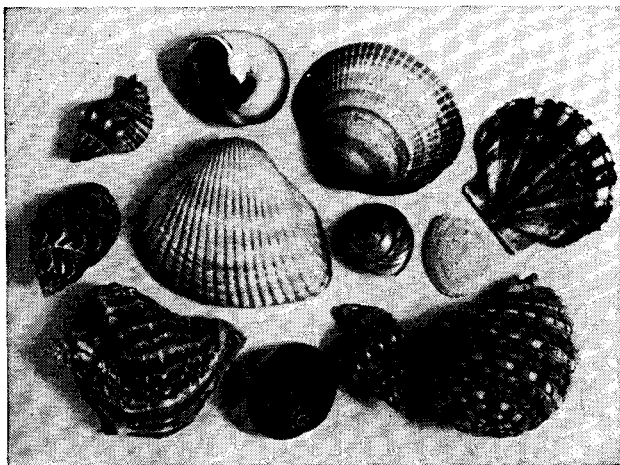
Forks campus for a year or more of study leading to a bachelor's degree. While they are at the university, the teachers' places are taken by the New School's master's degree candidates, who spend September to June of the master's year teaching, under close supervision from the New School faculty. Participation in the program is voluntary on the part of the teachers, who commit themselves to return to their schools for a minimum of one year, as well as of their supervisors and school boards. In 1968-1969, the first year of operation, fourteen school districts participated. The number more than doubled at the beginning of the 1969-1970 school year, and the state's three largest cities—Fargo, Grand Forks, and Minot—are all participating. Thus, the program appears to be winning support throughout the state. It also appears to be remarkably successful, and the impact on the teachers is quite evidently profound.

So far as the children are concerned, it is, of course, too soon to measure how informal education has affected the children's ability in the three R's. Records of some individual classes, however, indicate strikingly large gains in reading ability during the first year, and on direct observation, the quality of the writing, arithmetic, and science, while uneven, was frequently quite impressive.

What cannot be doubted is that the children are visibly happy and engaged. They express as much enthusiasm for the new approach as do the teachers: school is fun, something new in this heartland of the Protestant Ethic.

ITEM: "Last year we had to work all the time. Now we can play all the time," one little boy volunteers to the visitor, as he "plays" with a complicated mathematical game.

One of the measures of the children's enthusiasm is the markedly improved attendance records of most of the schools in the program. "The children won't stay home even when they're sick," a Minot teacher reports. And a woman teaching in a wooden two-room schoolhouse wrote, in her self-evaluation,



"I have had several mothers tell me that this is the first year they haven't had to fight every morning to get their youngsters to school. I think this is perhaps my greatest accomplishment."

To be sure, some children have had difficulty making the change. "I liked it better last year," one fastidious little girl informed the visitor. "Our seats were in straight rows and it never got messy." Hers is very much a minority view, however. But the children's evident pleasure has troubled some of their hardworking parents, who worry that the youngsters are having too much fun; work, especially schoolwork, is *supposed* to be arduous and unpleasant.

By and large, however, parental resistance has been overcome, in part through a great deal of painstaking explanations the New School teachers have given at meetings of community organizations as well as PTA's, in part through the parents' gradual recognition that their children were learning a great deal—that they were reading proficiently, writing fluently, and handling arithmetic with ease. (In one case, the turning point seems to have been the parents' discovery that their youngest child was mastering fractions before their older children in their formal classes.) By the end of the first year, almost all of the parents were expressing considerable enthusiasm.

ITEM: From a father's letter to an elementary school principal: "May my son come to school earlier? There's so much he wants to do and he can't seem to fit it all in during the regular hours."

The impact the New School has had is all the more remarkable in view of the fact that the first batch of teachers sent into the field had only a single summer session of preparation for informal teaching. During that session, however, the regular New School faculty had been supplemented by a team of English advisers, heads, and teachers. Despite the brevity of the preparation, the teachers have transformed the look, sound, and feel of their classrooms.

ITEM: A third-grade classroom in Minot, North Dakota's third largest city, population 33,477. Five children are plugged into a tape recorder, listening to a story and following it in the books in front of them. Another child is dictating a story he has written into a second tape recorder; when he finishes the dictation, he plays it back, a look of rapture on his face. Several others are watching a filmstrip on some aspect of Indian life; two of the children are operating the projector. Four children are painting at a huge easel made by the teacher. Others are busy reading and writing at a large homemade carrel in the middle of

the reading area. One youngster is reading in a booth the teacher has built for children who need privacy. Made out of the packing crate in which a large freezer had been shipped, the booth has a door and window, two chairs, and a light.

ITEM: The school in Lakota, North Dakota, population 1658, where four New School teachers work with 130 fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-graders. The visitor arrives as the school day begins; the children come in one by one or in groups, removing their boots, hanging up their coats and hats, and chattering away while some delightful folk music fills the room. Every day a different record is played.

ITEM: In another fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade classroom, the children are all sprawled on the floor in groups, working on a series of murals. It is too soon to judge the murals, but the walls are covered with some lovely impressionist paintings of a recent blizzard. The room itself has a verve and flair that bespeak imagination and talent: it is subdivided into any number of sections by dividers made of corrugated paper, which the children have painted in abstract and pop styles.

ITEM: A classroom in Edmore, population 405. Three girls and two boys tell their teacher they have prepared a skit and ask if the visitors can stay to see them put it on. The teacher, after conferring with the visitors, agrees, and then teacher, visitors, and classmates see the skit for the first time. The adults are as much impressed by these rural youngsters' poise and style as by the skit itself.

In no sense, however, are the rooms mere slavish imitations of English classrooms. The similarities are readily apparent, but so are the differences. Because of the American penchant for hardware and gadgetry it is rare to find a classroom that is not equipped with carrels with filmstrip machines and screen, overhead projectors, tape recorders with a number of plug-in listening posts, record players, typewriters, and what-have-you.

The science areas are richer and more extensive than those in the typical English primary school, reflecting the rural American interest in the natural world and the near-universal American interest in machinery.

ITEM: The math-science area for the fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade class in Lakota had originally two ample-sized rooms. The teachers, working as a team, chose to have the wall separating their two rooms removed, thereby creating one enormous area. The science workshop contains, among other items:

- An incubator with twelve eggs hatching in it, which some children chose to observe systematically, once a week for the first two weeks, and every day thereafter;
- Four cages of white mice;
- Two microscopes;
- An internal-combustion engine, which some boys had put into working condition;
- A rusty, dismantled motor from an old washing machine, which two other youngsters were restoring to shape;
- An old radio, which two ten-year-olds were taking apart in order to put it in working condition;
- An intercom system which a fourth-grader was assembling;
- Several shelves containing batteries, transformers, heating elements, magnifying glasses, electric resistors, iron filings, test tubes, Bunsen burners, and a host of other such material;
- An arrangement of every kind of shell imaginable, labeled with name and place of origin by people who may never have been outside the landlocked state of North Dakota;
- A display of some fifty different kinds of grains and seeds, again carefully labeled;
- Another display of bark from different kinds of trees;
- A collection of carefully mounted butterflies;
- An overhead viewer and projector.

Every student was working on his individual study project. Before beginning, he had written a proposal, stating what his topic was to be, what materials he planned to use, and how he planned to go about resolving the particular problem that he had set up. Typically, although not always, the boys leaned toward mechanical and electrical problems and the girls toward nature study. In almost every instance, the work was of an impressively high level. Almost staggering in its complexity was a project showing how an automobile ignition system works, with complicated diagrams of battery, switch, coil, spark plugs, distributor, rotary switch, and more.

ITEM: The science area in a second- and third-grade room in Starkweather. A small group of eight-year-olds guide their visitor through a display of seashells and rocks, talking knowledgeably as they go. Next they come to a section containing a snakeskin, jars of pickled frogs, pickled deer brains, pickled pig brains, and, the pride of their display, a pair of pig's eyes rolling wildly in a jar of formaldehyde. Oblivious to the visitor's queasy stomach, one boy discusses the surgery he performed on the pig. He points out the toughness of the white of the eye—how he discovered that while he was trying to pierce it, why the white of the eye has to be tough, and how it compares



with the toughness of the white of the human eye. The visitor is relieved when the group moves on to a display of brilliantly colored photographs of dinosaurs, fossils, even insects, and then to a map of the moon, a microscope, slides, and other more familiar material.

The biggest difference between the North Dakota and the English informal classrooms, however, is in the approach to reading. The North Dakota schools place substantially more emphasis on learning to read in the first grade, and there is considerably more formal instruction in reading as well as a good bit more evaluation of children's reading progress. American parents simply cannot accept the casual approach that characterizes the English classroom. By and large, however, teachers have been able to emphasize reading instruction within the framework of informal, individualized instruction.

Some 1500 miles to the east, in the city of New York, population 8 million, a much more limited, but no less significant, experiment in informal education is going on in five elementary schools. The experiment had its origins in the extreme dissatisfaction which Professor Lillian Weber felt, on her return from England, in sending her City College students into conventional classrooms to do their student teaching, classrooms that controverted everything she had tried to teach them about the nature of child development and the psychology of learning. Such an arrangement was self-defeating, since a large body of research suggests that the particular classroom teacher with whom students do their practice teaching exerts the decisive influence on the development of their teaching style.

Placing the students in the hothouse atmosphere of a laboratory school, on the other hand, also seemed unsatisfactory; it would not, Professor Weber felt, prepare them for the harsh realities of the classrooms and schools in which, in all probability, they would be working. If her students were to be able to exert any influence for change, Professor Weber reasoned, they would have to learn how to deal with

schools as they are, and how to handle all the obstacles, frustrations, and petty irritations that change usually evokes.

The solution was to carve out a small section of P.S. 123, a central Harlem elementary school which Mrs. Weber served as consultant, and in which she had helped develop the pre-kindergarten program before going to England. (The school was one of four Harlem schools affiliated with City College's School of Education, where Mrs. Weber teaches early childhood education.) In the course of her eighteen months of close study of informal English schools, Mrs. Weber had come to regard the use of the hall and corridors—what she likes to call “in-and-outness”—as one of the keys of the schools' success. Her program began, therefore, by using only the corridor outside a group of five participating classrooms; the five classes included one pre-kindergarten, two kindergartens, a first-grade and a second-grade room around the “L” at one end of the school's first floor.

Setting up the “stuff” for informal teaching in the corridor—initially, for just an hour a day, three days a week—had the further advantage of giving the five classroom teachers access to the new approach without forcing it upon them. Mrs. Weber was determined to avoid any direct challenge to the teachers or to the autonomy of their classrooms. Her object, in addition to training her own students in informal teaching, was to explore how far one could go toward freeing the classroom structure and developing more intimate, humane settings, starting with the base of the existing curriculum and grade organization. Indeed, she strenuously resisted attempts by others to pin labels like “free day” on what she was doing. “We were Americans,” she wrote in summarizing the experience, “and the point was to try to develop support for the child's learning drive in our own context, not to use terms and labels that didn't apply.”

Hence the teachers, who had agreed to participate in the experiment, and who had been involved in the planning from the outset, were obliged only to schedule their classes in such a way as to provide the common hour three times a week during which the corridor could be used. They were also asked to suggest some activity which they particularly wanted to do in their classrooms during the corridor hour, and which they would be willing to share with other teachers and children. One teacher chose a collection of guinea pigs and other small animals, another a phonograph and records for dancing, a third a workbench and tools, and a fourth an oven, all of which Mrs. Weber purchased with a \$1000 grant she had obtained from a small foundation.

The “open corridor” came into being in the spring of 1968, after months of preparation and planning. For the rest of that school year, during the thrice-weekly corridor hour, each teacher would release five children at a time to visit the corridor

or one of the other four rooms. (The teachers agreed to accept up to three children from other classes.) Inside the classrooms, teachers used the hour as they wished. The class with the animals became a point of interest for the whole school, particularly after the second batch of guinea pigs was born. The corridor activities—a sandbox, a water table, tables with rich math materials, blocks, easels—were supervised by Professor Weber's students.

At first, the classroom teachers tended to direct the children, or to insist that they stay with a single activity for the entire hour. Gradually, however, they became less concerned with "giving" the children "full experiences" and more content with letting them explore on their own; and the children, once the novelty of the rich environment wore off, were able to settle down with a single activity. Both teachers and children also learned to talk in normal conversational tones—the children more quickly than the teachers. (In the beginning, the noise level was high, as teachers and children continued to speak with the volume needed to address a whole class.)

By the end of the semester, the impact was substantial. The children clearly enjoyed the corridor activities, greeting their teachers each morning with the query, "Is it corridor today?" The teachers learned to handle the unexpected, and became less concerned about the interruption to their planned instructions, as they discovered that the children were creative as well as active in the corridor—that they were learning as well as playing. Most important, perhaps, the teachers were won over as they realized that their discipline problems had been sharply reduced, and that they consequently had far less need to exercise conscious control.

The corridor, in fact, became a magnet that attracted children from all over the building, with the older children showing particular interest. At first, the teachers resented the intrusion and ordered the outsiders away. Gradually, however, some of them came to welcome the older children, inviting them to look around if they would like, and in some cases, forming close relationships with them.

Before the semester was over a group of parents and teachers from another school came to observe the open corridor. They were sufficiently impressed to persuade their district superintendent to invite Lillian Weber to introduce the program the following year in their school, P.S. 84, located in a racially mixed neighborhood of low- to high-income families. Before the program got under way, however, the custodian forbade the use of the corridors, claiming violation of the fire laws, and so Professor Weber and the teachers had to revamp the classrooms themselves. By spring, the change was dramatic, if sometimes faltering or erratic.

ITEM: A girl approaches the visitor to ask, "What are you doing?" and invites her to join

her in the math area, where she picks out a game with various shapes and matching cards. Two boys, already there, are using the Cuisenaire rods, and another two are playing a game with pegboards and sticks; the teacher is working with a small group of children, holding up cards that say, "Make something with 3 black," "Make something with 2 yellow," and so on. On the bulletin board, in a child's writing, is a report reading, "Gordon and Scott weighed themselves. Gordon weighed 50. Scott weighed 43. Who weighed more? Gordon weighed more." After a few minutes, the teacher plays a xylophone to get the class's attention; the children stop and listen, as the teacher softly tells them it is time to clean up. Denise, who was about to teach the visitor a new game, says, "I'll teach it to you another day," and puts it away.

At P.S. 123, meanwhile, the project continued in the corridor, expanding from the three hours a week of the preceding spring to a "corridor period" of an hour and a half a day during the 1968-1969 school year.

Besides the greater time allocated to the corridor activities in the second year, there was much more fluid movement of both children and teachers in and out of the corridor and the participating rooms, and a substantial amount of stuff began to infiltrate the classrooms themselves. It is the corridor, however, where most of the action is and most of the stuff can be found. On a morning in March, a visitor sees the following:

- A huge sheet of brown paper, on which two girls are drawing pictures of and writing stories about the gerbils. (By the end of the morning, the paper is hanging on the wall.)
- At another table, a little girl is attaching numbered weights to each arm of a balance scale. By the end of the corridor hour, she has determined—and written down—the fact that "4 + 3 equals 5 + 2 equals 7."
- A table with rulers and various lengths of string, which children are using to measure each other and anything else in sight. The table also contains a large "geoboard" and a box of rubber bands ("I made squares from rubber bands and screws," the boy at the geoboard writes), Cuisenaire rods, and a host of stuff for counting, almost all of it in use.
- Another table containing a box with various colored plastic rings that fit together; mirrors and plastic shapes; boxes of disks with numbers on each; and mounds and mounds of colored cubes that children are interlocking together, making towers, apartment houses, etc. One girl is measuring herself against her tower to see if she is longer or shorter; a boy is counting how many yellows, how many reds, how

many greens, etc., there are in the Rube Goldberg contraption he has put together.

- Blocks of every conceivable size, shape, and color.
- A water table, big enough for six children, with an array of different-sized and -shaped plastic bottles, pitchers, and containers for measuring and pouring.
- A table with crayons, "Magic Markers," pencils, writing paper, drawing paper, all in use.

And much, much more; the movement is so fluid that the visitor finds it impossible to make a complete inventory. More striking than the richness of materials, however, is the atmosphere of joyousness that pervades.

ITEM: A little girl, who has been flirting as she works with pencil and paper, finishes her effort and triumphantly hands it to the visitor. It reads:

PS 123

Gazella

March 19, 1969

I feel good

I feel good and not Bad. I met a new teacher and her name is Mrs. Silberman.

1	6	3	3	3
+	+	+	+	—
1 =	6	3	9	0 =
—	—	—	—	—
2	12	6	12	3

This is central Harlem, where children have every reason to feel bad, not good. As the teachers report the background of one child after another, the visitor understands what a tepid euphemism "disadvantaged" is. The classes participating in the corridor program include, among others, an orphan who lives with a blind grandmother, two children whose mothers are in mental hospitals, a child whose father was killed in Vietnam and whose mother is a prostitute, another orphan who had lived with his grandmother until she was incapacitated by a stroke and who now lives with an aunt, a child who had watched her mother be gradually destroyed by multiple sclerosis and who now lives with her grandmother, a child brought to New York from Jamaica and then abandoned, a child whose father had just been killed in an automobile accident, a child whose parents have been trying to abandon him for some time.

And yet the visitor does not need Gazella's note to know that these incredibly resilient children are indeed happy, at least while they are in school. "You could see it in the bodies of the girls who were dancing to the soul records," she reports. "You could read it in the eyes of the boys who were building airplanes and scooters at the workbench. You

could hear it in the babble of voices. (How nice it is to hear children talking in school!) And you could sense it in the purposeful comings and goings of children as they left one room for another, and then one table in the corridor for another."

And the purpose, it is clear, is learning—learning to talk comfortably, learning to read, learning to write. Every activity, in fact, seems to result in reading and writing. In some cases, the writing comes easily, in some with great difficulty. One little girl, for example, has to ask the visitor how to spell every word she wants to use, but her inability to spell does not daunt her in the least; she keeps writing and writing and writing. Clearly, these children have things they *want* to say; their impulse to communicate impels them to write, to read, to talk.

ITEM: From a composition being written in the corridor by a first-grader (spelling as in the original): "I like Miss Dubovick. I like the way she likes me too and she is a good girl too me. Love Sandra H."

ITEM: Two girls offer to read their second grade's daily newspaper, entitled the *Phony News*, which is written on the blackboard. (The children had picked the name, rejecting the traditional the *Happy News*.) With a "Look Ma, no hands" flourish, a third child demonstrates her skill by reading the paper backwards, as does a fourth. Clearly, these children are *reading* each word, not repeating from memory or guessing words from the general context.

ITEM: A seven-year-old boy, having finished building an elaborate contraption of wood, cardboard, and assorted other materials, writes, with evident self-satisfaction and a little help with the spelling, "I made an astronaut. I made the door of the astronaut's capsule." Mrs. Weber reports that the boys are reading and writing as well as, or better than, the girls, breaking the usual pattern in which boys lag considerably behind girls. The reason, she suggests, is that these boys have male things to do, in sharp contrast to the femininity of the usual elementary school classroom.

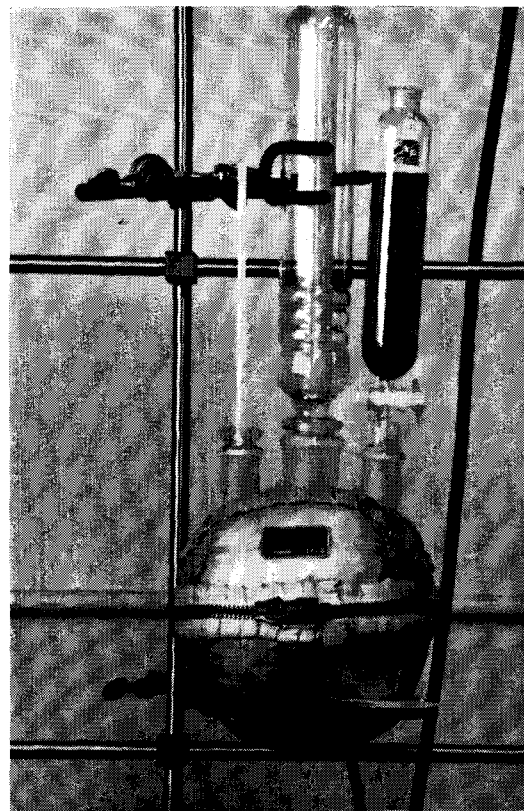
These results are being achieved, moreover, in heterogeneously grouped classes taught by typical New York City teachers. While participation was voluntary, none of the teachers was handpicked for the program; almost all were profoundly affected by it. One teacher, for example, freely confessed that when the year began, she saw her children—and referred to them—as "animals" and "savages"; by spring, she had a warm and close relationship with almost every child. Understandably, therefore, the experiment is spreading; upon request Professor Weber established informal classrooms in three more schools in the current school year, bringing the total to thirty-seven.

While the North Dakota and New York experiments represent conscious attempts to adapt and modify English methods for American use, a number of important programs have developed independently, and without prior knowledge, of the English experience.

In 1964, for example, Mrs. Lore Rasmussen, a dynamic educator who had, among other things, run a cooperative children's camp in Michigan and taught education at a Southern Negro college and math in an independent school in the Philadelphia suburbs, accepted a position as a math supervisor in one of Philadelphia's poorest Negro slums. Her varied background had persuaded her that silent, rigid, authoritarian, almost purely verbal formal classrooms had to be transformed into informal, humane workshops filled with concrete materials that children could manipulate, count, move, rearrange, stack, measure, join, and separate. Like Lillian Weber, Mrs. Rasmussen recognized that she could not produce the change she wanted by simply walking into a classroom and telling a teacher what to do, or even by taking over a class herself, turning it into a model of what she had in mind; she would be defeated, she felt, by the physical arrangements themselves—the rows of desks, taking up all the floor space, facing forward toward the teacher as if she were the Source of All Knowledge. Change would be more effective, she decided, by enticing rather than bludgeoning teachers into gradually adopting new approaches and new materials.

The solution was to set up shop in the basement of an elementary school, and to invite teachers to bring their classes for an hour a week. The room was furnished very much like the maths area of an informal English classroom. The teachers were perfectly happy to come, since Mrs. Rasmussen took over the class for the hour, giving them an unscheduled free period. A pot of coffee, the freedom to smoke, and a comfortable chair or two set up in one corner served to keep most teachers in the room for the period, thereby exposing them, as well as the children, to the new materials and approach.

A school principal, impressed by what he saw during a visit, asked Mrs. Rasmussen to set up a similar workshop in his school the following year. By the end of four years, nine such "Learning Centers," as they came to be called, had been established in the Philadelphia schools, their purpose broadened considerably beyond the original concern with math alone. Although each one has its own flavor, reflecting the interests and capabilities of the teachers in the school in which it is located, the centers are comfortable and inviting rooms, with an abundance of materials and equipment to which the children have free and easy access. Their tone is nonauthoritarian, although considerable use is made of teacher-directed individual or small-group activities as well as child-initiated play; the emphasis is on developing competence in language, math, and science, with



relatively little attention given to the arts. In short, the Learning Centers, although far less structured than the typical American classroom, tend to be a good bit more structured than English free day classrooms. In part, that greater structure reflects greater preoccupation with formal curriculum objectives. In good measure, however, it simply reflects the exigencies of scheduling; most children get to spend only an hour a week in a Learning Center.

That hour tends to be divided into four parts. There is, first, the "welcoming minutes," when the lab teacher greets the children at the door. The explicit goal is to set a relaxed, informal tone and to make each child feel that he or she is personally expected and valued; hugs are given and returned, compliments exchanged, and secrets whispered.

The second part of the hour is typically a teacher-directed "talking and doing" session. As Mrs. Rasmussen describes it for participating teachers:

Now the children are either sitting on the floor or in a semi-circle around the teacher and her surprise activity or toys for the day, or they are seated informally around tables in the lab classroom, each with a set of his own laboratory materials to explore under the teacher's guidance. This period is semi-structured but not rigidly pre-planned. It may last from five to thirty minutes depending on the interest and maturity of the children. Active involvement of the children is sought. They must get a chance to do much talking, acting, touching, chanting, listening, wondering, laughing—all this around some theme which is begun simply but which builds up into

interwoven thought. Because it is *their* learning session, humor, whimsy, individuality, playfulness, non-conformity, are not only tolerated, but actively encouraged as long as they represent appropriate styles of response fitting the common theme.

ITEM: A Learning Center teacher directs a first-grade class in a series of games designed to show how different kinds of language—gestures, actions, words—can portray different moods, situations, identities. “Let’s look angry in as many different ways as you can,” she tells the children. “Let’s look and sound angry in as many different ways as you can.” “Now let’s laugh in different ways,” she says. “First let’s giggle. Now let’s snicker. Let me hear a belly laugh like Santa gives.” As groups of children make up their own variants, the teacher begins playing a subtler game with two or three children at a time. In this game, the child must describe a toy or game or other object without naming it, listing as many characteristics as possible—size, shape, color, texture, and so forth—until the teacher or another child can pick it off the shelf.

ITEM: Four second-grade children sit around a table containing four mail-order catalogues, four sets of advertisements from department stores, four pads, four pencils, and four “adding-multiplying” machines. For a time, the children select random items from the catalogues for the sheer fun of going “shopping” and then adding up costs. Then they follow a prepared “suggestion card” written by the teacher, directing each child to pretend that he has a forty-dollar budget with which to buy a complete Easter outfit, from hat to shoes, from underwear to lightweight coat. A furious amount of addition, subtraction, and multiplication ensues as the children struggle to stretch the budget as far as possible. For these children, arithmetic has become “relevant.”

ITEM: The teacher directs a group of children in a game about circles. The children dance into large circles, small circles, tiny circles. They intersect. They form concentric circles. Then, with pencils, paper, and compasses, the children each make a “Circle Book,” no two of which are alike. It is clear that they understand terms like “connecting,” “concentric,” “intersecting,” as well as subtle differences between “huge” and “large” or “small” and “tiny.”

The third part of the hour is devoted to non-directed play and work—a time to experiment, explore, and invent. Now the scissors and colored paper and paste are seized upon, the blocks manipulated, the magnifying glasses and mirrors and microscopes scrutinized, the rubber bands stretched into every conceivable shape on geoboards, the

spring scales and balance scales given a workout with pebbles and bottle caps and washers.

ITEM: Two little girls dress up in “grownup” clothes; together with a boy, they play house in a remarkably sophisticated manner. The two “mothers” decide on their marketing list, writing the order on a pad, and then dictating it over the phone to the grocery store clerk. The clerk takes down the order but tells them they will have to come and call for it; his delivery man has gone home. Off the girls trot, weaving on their high heels as they go. Everything is fine until it comes time to pay the bill; the clerk has arrived at one total, the shoppers another. The impasse is resolved by going to the “bead bank”—a table with three sealed jars, each containing beads of a different color to represent “ones,” “tens,” and “hundreds,” and a huge open jar containing beads of all three colors. The children arrange the beads until they agree on the correct answer.

ITEM: An eight-year-old third-grader is fascinated with the way ordinary, everyday objects look under a microscope. After examining one item after another, she writes the following story:

A pice of nylon under a micscope looks like thread loosely sewn together. Sandpaper looks like tiny crystles. Under the Microscope there are a million things to see. It is like being in another world. A mircsope is something great! What would a scientist do if there wasn't a mircscope how could they see things closer?

The final segment is cleanup time: at a prearranged signal, the children stop what they are doing and put the Learning Center back in shape for the next class. Even cleaning up, Mrs. Rasmussen insists, can provide an opportunity for learning, since children are involved in sorting, matching, arranging, and separating materials, and in working with one another. When the children leave, there is a fifteen- or twenty-minute staff meeting to discuss individual children’s behavior and plan activities for the next time the class visits the center.

Bit by bit, as in Lillian Weber’s corridor program, the teachers found themselves drawn into the activities, instead of merely sitting by, sipping their coffee and watching passively. They discovered that the worst punishment they could mete out to a child was to forbid him to go to the Learning Center. More important, they recognized—often to their utter astonishment—that behavior problems seemed to melt away in the open environment, that children could move about and talk freely without getting out of control, and learn a great deal in the process. As a result, teachers have begun flocking to Mrs. Rasmussen’s “Teacher Resource Center,” where they can learn to use the new approach, and also make materials for their classrooms.

About the same time Lore Rasmussen was beginning her program in one of Philadelphia's Negro slums, Dr. Marie Hughes, professor of educational psychology at the University of Arizona and director of its Research and Development Center in Early Childhood Education, was launching an extensive experiment for disadvantaged Mexican-American children in the Tucson public schools.

In Tucson, as in the rest of the Southwest, generations of Mexican-Americans have found school a hostile place that breeds failure. When they begin school at age six—Arizona provides no public kindergartens—many Mexican-American children manifest a quality that Tucson teachers call “shyness,” an apparent lack of curiosity that borders on withdrawal.

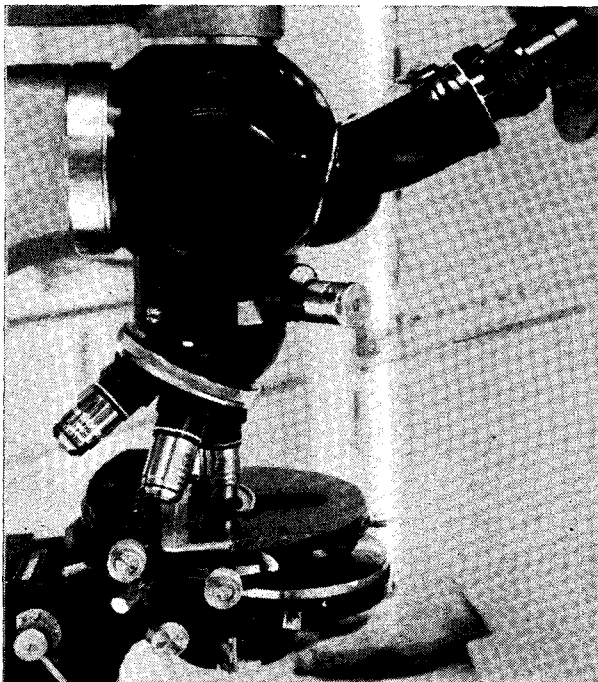
Equally important, the children are as inarticulate as they are passive. Their difficulty in expressing themselves is accompanied by difficulty in learning to read and write, which frequently leads to their being “retained” (educationese for left back) in first grade at least once, and frequently twice. Tucson school officials place large numbers of Mexican-American children in special “1C” classes, which means that they automatically remain in first grade for two years—but without any significant change in the standard curriculum. Being earmarked for failure helps to produce failure, of course, along with a good deal of hostility to school and teachers, reflected in extraordinarily high absentee rates as well as a good deal of disruptive behavior. Failure also reinforces the negative view of themselves which discrimination and poverty have instilled in the children by the time they start school. By sixth grade, therefore, Mexican-American

children tend to score one and a half to three years below the Anglos on reading and other tests.

If Mexican-American or other slum children are to succeed,* Dr. Hughes reasoned, the school experience must help them develop a positive attitude toward themselves; they have to see themselves as people of worth, capable of dealing with their environment. This in turn provides a base on which the program's other objectives can be built. Those objectives are fourfold: developing a positive attitude toward learning; developing the children's language ability, with particular emphasis on talking freely and comfortably; developing an “intellectual base,” that is, learning how to learn, how to process information, how to solve problems, how to distinguish cause and effect and to classify and label; and acquiring the skills of reading, writing, and arithmetic, as well as the social skills involved in getting along with others.

Each of these objectives seemed to Dr. Hughes to require a change not only in curriculum, but in teaching methods and classroom organization as well, for each required a degree and kind of individualization not possible in the conventional classroom. To develop positive self-image, teachers would have to make clear to each child that he is a person of worth—to respond to his behavior in ways that would convey a sense of trust and affection. Moreover, since self-image grows out of a child's own activities as well as the activities and attitudes of others—to feel good about himself, a child must have a sense of competence—teachers would have to structure classroom activities to give every child frequent experiences of success. To develop a language base, teachers would have to get children talking freely. Since Mexican-American youngsters find talking in English difficult, and often threatening, this meant that teachers would have to shift the emphasis from the use of language *per se* to the topic of conversation itself, by getting each child to talk about things that matter to him. And so it went.

The result was a classroom structure and approach remarkably like the English “free day,” though with important differences as well. The rows of desks facing the front of the room have been abandoned, replaced in part by interest areas, in part by small tables with chairs grouped around them. For half the day, children are free to follow their own inclinations at the various interest areas, rich in games, blocks, toys, books, musical instruments, animals (every room seems to have, at the least, a fish tank and a collection of silkworms). Unlike the informal English schools, however, children remain in their own self-contained classrooms, without spilling over into the corridors



* The program includes a scattering of Indian, Negro, and Anglo children as well as Mexican-Americans.

or other rooms. There are fewer concrete materials in the math area, and less emphasis on painting, sculpting, and building than in England.

The contrast with the usual Mexican-American classroom, with its rows of silent, sullen, withdrawn children, is overwhelming. The visitor is immediately struck by the fact that these children are comfortable with themselves and with each other, as they move freely about the room, chattering volubly to each other and to the teacher, visibly happy and engaged. There is little "shyness" in evidence in the Hughes classrooms, and little absenteeism, too.

There is, however, a good deal of learning. While half the day is "free," the other half is highly structured, with a variety of teacher-directed activities designed to enhance the children's competence in language, cognitive development, and the three R's. Few of the activities, however, involve the teacher standing in front of the room, addressing the entire class. Instead, the teacher and an aide, provided for the structured half of the day, work with children in groups of five, the children seated around round tables just large enough to accommodate them.

ITEM: A first-grade classroom. Children at several tables are working with "intellectual kits"—homemade collections of stuff organized around some common characteristic or theme. At one table, a master teacher is "modeling" the Hughes approach for the classroom teacher. The process can be used for any kind of kit—teachers are encouraged to make up their own—or for any objects a teacher may use to get children talking, observing, comparing, classifying, and so on.

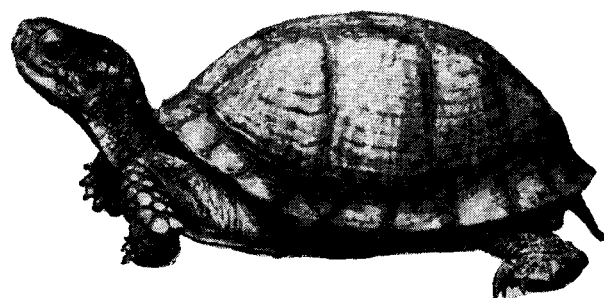
Each of the five children has a kit, made out of a piece of bright red felt. The master teacher begins by asking the children if they can guess what's inside without looking. "It's something hard," one boy volunteers. "Mario thinks he feels something hard," the teacher repeats, asking for more replies. "It's noisy," another child suggests. "Carla shook her package and heard noises," the teacher responds. "I wonder what kind of material makes noises?" "I think it's metal," a third ventures. "Juan thinks the material is made of metal, Carla thinks the material makes noises, and Mario thinks he felt something hard," the teacher continues. "Hearing is a good way of finding out, and so is touching. How else can we find out about things?" "Looking," one child replies. "Well, then, why don't you open your kits and see what is inside." The children open the kits with gusto; each has a collection of keys of various shapes, sizes, and functions—assorted house keys and car keys, a big black wrought iron decorative key, a small metal key that winds a toy car, the tiny key to a personal diary, and so on.

After the children have handled the keys for a few minutes, the teacher continues the lesson,

asking if anyone can find two keys that look alike. Carlos offers two keys that are the same length but have differently shaped tops. "They certainly do have shafts of the same length," the teacher replies, rubbing her finger along the length of the shaft, but not translating the word directly, and not correcting the child directly; instead, she works the word "shaft" into the conversation several times. For a half hour, the lesson continues, as teacher and children talk about the keys, comparing and differentiating them according to size, shape, color, material, weight, and use.

Learning is not confined to the classroom; there are a great many trips, designed to extend the children's experience and to provide experiences that can be used as a base for both language and cognitive development. An unwritten rule provides that there must be two excursions within the barrios for every trip outside, a means of conveying interest in, and respect for, the children's own background (essential to developing a sense of worth), and also of (hopefully) involving parents, grandparents, and other members of the adult community in school activities.

As in the three programs already described, the Hughes program uses ordinary classroom teachers; none have been handpicked. The program differs, however, in a number of other respects. Unlike Lillian Weber and Lore Rasmussen, who believe that change will be more effective and more lasting if it proceeds slowly, Marie Hughes began her program on a comparatively large scale and is expanding it rapidly to some eighteen public school systems around the country. Since Professor Hughes attempts to structure the process rather than the content of the curriculum, teachers are free to vary the materials according to the interests and needs of the children they are teaching. The schools involved include a remarkable cross section of the United States: cities with large black populations like Newark, Baltimore, and Los Angeles; communities with Indian-Americans like Chickasha, Oklahoma, and three Bureau of Indian Affairs schools outside Philadelphia, Mississippi; other cities, like Santa Fe and Fort Worth, with large Mexican-American populations; Pikesville, Kentucky, a heartland of white Appalachia; Hoonah, Alaska, with a predominantly Eskimo popula-



tion; as well as Des Moines, Iowa; Durham, North Carolina; Lakewood, New Jersey; Vincennes, Indiana; Abbyville, Louisiana; Lafayette, Georgia; Lincoln, Nebraska; and Wichita, Kansas.

Unlike North Dakota, moreover, where the introduction of informal education is tied to an elaborate program of teacher education and re-education at the university, the teachers in the Hughes program receive little or no advance preparation. Professor Hughes would have liked to give teachers a summer of preservice training, but funds were not available. Instead, teachers are trained in their own classrooms.

There is a danger that the American penchant for fads could lead to promotion of informal education as the panacea for all educational ills. It isn't. Some teachers may simply be temperamentally unsuited to the approach; a good formal teacher is to be preferred to a poor informal one. Some children, moreover, or some subjects—quite possibly, reading—may require more structure, more teacher direction, and more specificity of goals than the typical informal classroom provides. And experience is still too scanty to know what blends of formal and informal methods work best in the upper primary and secondary grades.

It is crucial that the most careful preparations be made, so that those involved understand and accept the changes being made. American parents are perfectly capable of understanding and accepting informal education if it is explained to them, and American teachers can adopt informal teaching styles with grace and enthusiasm if—but only if—they receive sufficient training and support. Teachers are bound to need a good deal of continuing help and reassurance if they are to make the change comfortably and successfully. Some children may feel the need to test the limits of their freedom, and others may have difficulty coping with choice. So may some of the teachers.

"In order to free the child," Harold Rugg argued, it is necessary "first to free the teacher." The process can be unsettling.

"My teachers and I do not know what to do with this freedom," a high school principal once said of the changes which Progressive Education introduced. "It challenges and frightens us. I fear that we have come to love our chains."

Not every principal is that sensitive or understanding. Indeed, given the obsession with silence and lack of movement so many principals, superintendents, and curriculum supervisors show, and the fact that teachers' ability tends to be judged

more on their "control" than on any other attribute, it is essential that *someone* be available to relieve teachers' anxiety about what their supervisors may say if they see children talking or moving about in class. Teaching, after all, is a very lonely profession. Only someone who is acting as an adviser, who has no evaluative function and is not competing with or threatening the teacher, can break through the teacher's loneliness and isolation.

The teacher re-education that accompanies introduction of informal methods must include the supervisors as well, for they are victims of the school culture, too. The North Dakota experience indicates that principals, no less than teachers, will welcome the new approach if they have the opportunity to understand it. Thus, a special 1969 summer program for principals, many of whom had been indifferent or even hostile to the new approach, was so successful that the principals, with only one of their number dissenting, asked the New School faculty to provide additional workshops for them during the course of the school year.

A certain continuing vigilance is also needed, for informal education can be as mindless in its own sweet, well-intentioned way as the arid formalism it replaces. Certainly there is a danger, evident in a few of the classrooms visited in England and the United States and perhaps inherent in the approach itself, that the pendulum of informality and child-centeredness may swing too far, thereby embracing the flabbiness and anti-intellectualism that characterized so many of the progressive schools of the 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s. "You have to be careful not to let this new kind of teaching become a 'cop-out,'" a teacher in Lore Rasmussen's Philadelphia program warns. "The kids are happy, the discipline problem is nil, and it's awfully easy for a teacher to convince herself that the kids are having a 'learning experience' or some damned thing, no matter what they're doing."

Finding the right balance is never easy; there will always be a certain tension between two groups of educational objectives—those concerned with individual growth and fulfillment, and those concerned with the transmission of specific skills, intellectual disciplines, and bodies of knowledge. In the older American progressive schools, the balance certainly needed to be tipped toward the cognitive; in most American schools today, as Geoffrey Caston argues, on the basis of extensive visits, "the need is to tip it very strongly back toward the affective." In doing so, there is a risk of tipping too far; fortunately, the people in charge of most of the current experiments in informal education seem to be well aware of the danger. □

LIFE & LETTERS:

ISAAC BASHEVIS SINGER SCOFFS

by Israel Shenker

In the beginning was the word, recalled Isaac Bashevis Singer, and in the end (he added) is garbage.

"There were a very few literary talents in every generation," he said in a recent conversation over lunch, "but since there were few publishers, it didn't matter. Now there are hundreds of publishers, and every year they have to publish 5000 books of fiction. Where should they get the talents? The demand is a thousand times the supply.

"A big publisher has ten or twelve editors, and each editor is anxious to find any little girl who writes about her aunt sleeping with soldiers, so he can hail the work of genius. Publishers sell it for hard covers and soft covers, and they should sell it for slipcovers."

* * *

"Heine once said,

*Achtundvierzig Professoren,
Vaterland, du bist verloren.*
(When professors number forty-eight,
Fatherland, it's much too late.)

"When I see that the P.E.N. Club has thousands of members; where is the Heine who will say how lost we are? The whole game has become one of covering pages with ink, and if literature has become an industry, we're lost. Everything can be an industry, but not literature and not the theater.

"Very many people tell me they have stopped reading fiction because they've been fooled so many times.

I fear a rebellion of the readers—more serious than all the other rebellions we are living through."

* * *

"Some authors are so good-natured they will give you quotes saying your book is a masterpiece no matter how bad it is," Mr. Singer went on. "If they would give such quotes about food or medicine they would be put in prison.

"Literature is turning into a club of mutual admiration, and in America, where there are so many books published, the danger is greatest. There never appears a bad book which doesn't get some good quotes.

"The quote-givers must make an end to it. It's not written anywhere—not in the Bible, not in the Talmud—that one should praise junk, even if the junkman is your friend. It's written that you should love your neighbor, but not that you should praise his bad writing.

"When a book comes into print today, suddenly there are ten false witnesses to testify it is the greatest which has ever appeared. If I were Moses today, I'd add to the Commandment not to bear false witness another one: 'Don't praise your neighbor's bad writing.' Even if there were some good writers, they'd be lost in this muddy ocean of false praise. Instead of saying good is good and bad is bad, the critics say bad is good.

"My mother told a story about a Chinese emperor who was ugly and

decided that ugly would be considered beautiful. In Chelm (Poland), there was a shortage of sour cream at the festival of Shabuoth, so it was decreed that water would be called sour cream. The ladies were delighted, and said, 'With one word we solved the problem.' And that's how we solve the problem of literature: with one word we change junk to literature.

"A book will be praised for many reasons. One reviewer will praise a book for its optimism, another for its pessimism. One will praise it for using pornography, another for avoiding pornography. But seldom will a reviewer say a book is lousy.

"I say openly that the big prizes poured out each year are given to bunglers, not to writers (even if I have won some prizes myself), and that the praise poured out in literary magazines is false.

"We made fun of the Russians who said, 'Stalin is brighter than the sun' and 'Father of the Cosmos.' Now we do the same in literature. We call water sour cream—not only for one holiday, but for twenty years now."

* * *

"If our supermarkets gave us stale bread or bad cheese or sour milk there would be an outcry," he said. "But our literary supermarkets have lost all responsibility and we say nothing.

"I'm told there are many newspapers which do not take false ads.

If I want to advertise that a sandwich I sell will give eternal life, they will not print this ad. When bad books are praised to heaven, someone should veto *these* ads.

"If you take urine and advertise it as perfume, this is the beginning of the end of human independence. And we are living in a time when urine is advertised as perfume. Real perfumes begin to disappear, because the makers of perfume find it saves money to put urine into their product.

"There is a saying in the Talmud: 'Those who defend the wicked accuse the just.' Every lie is a danger to humanity. If a lie spreads, even only a literary lie, and millions are hypnotized to believe in it, it's dangerous. Trust is the nourishment of life.

"I don't think you can have freedom in a country where bad literature prevails. You begin with a small lie, and it embraces everything."

* * *

"Reviews should be like trials, sentencing—or acquitting—a human being," Mr. Singer said. "They should be taken seriously, or not at all. No book should be praised without hearing from the writer—through excerpts—and without getting another opinion.

"No critic should be forced to read fifty or one hundred books a year. You cannot really enjoy literature if you are forced to read so many books.

"I remember that the thing that horrified me about the Soviet Union was that judges would try a man in five minutes: 'You are a reactionary? To Siberia.' 'You are half a reactionary? To prison.'

"If you get rid of an author in twelve lines, it's just as if he were sentenced to Siberia in five minutes. If you put five hundred writers in a line and sentence them, something is wrong.

"In our country we still write thousands of pages to send a man to prison or to free him. But in reviews you feel the game is not worth the candle. And if the game isn't worth the candle, why should there be a game?

"The bad reviewers should give up reviewing, and the bad writers should stop writing. They should chop wood or do something else useful. If I weren't a writer, I'd do some work that is not ambiguous, that is of some use to someone. I'd

be a mover who would take furniture, without breaking it, from one apartment to another.

"There are plenty of things to do in this country. There are so many holes in the street, so much real garbage lying around which is not collected. No matter how bad a writer is, he must have gifts in other fields.

"For me literature is important, and I feel it's important for others. I often see people throwing away sections of the paper, but I seldom see people throw out the literary supplement. People expect something from this section, and to disappoint these people week in and week out is a sin.

"If owners of the press would ask me what to do, I'd say rather don't publish literary magazines than give readers false information.

"If you read magazines you are told every week that a few geniuses have arisen. At the end of the year the same magazines complain that nothing worthwhile has appeared in literature that year. The reviewers have suffered from amnesia, or else they don't care.

"If Moses came down from Sinai today with Ten Commandments, they'd say, 'These are the best Commandments we've had in a decade,' and then throw them into the garbage in the evening.

"There must come someone who will say we are poor in literature and also in criticism. I can see Gogol being resurrected and asking, 'What is the best book of the year?' And when he's handed *Portnoy's Complaint*, he'd want to go back to the grave."

* * *

"It's not an accident that so many magazines are turning to politics: their disdain for literature is so great," Mr. Singer added.

"Until a short time ago, literature didn't identify itself with a political attitude, and a good writer depended on himself. Now politics is creeping more and more into literature, and a bad writer finds support from others.

"In Soviet Russia, nothing can be published without the approval of the political authorities. Now we are creating little Central Committees here. We may reach the stage where the political loyalty of a writer will decide how he should be judged.

"A writer should not be judged

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July Report on

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A new book by **Catherine Drinker Bowen** always causes a stir in this office. But when we first saw **FAMILY PORTRAIT**, our excitement was intensified by the fact that Mrs. Bowen had used her considerable biographical powers to write about her own family.

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on the basis of whether he's for humans or against, for progress or against. Chateaubriand did not become a bad writer because he was a rightist; neither did Zola become bad because he was a leftist. If literature has to fight Johnson or Nixon, it's on its way out.

"Publishers should be concerned with only one thing: publishing good books. If they can't get good fiction, let them publish science. It's not the duty of a publisher to print bad authors, or of people to read them. We are not enhancing literature by making people read empty books.

"We have to create literary birth control. The children of the spirit must have as much care as the children of the bed."

* * *

"We had a Kafka," Mr. Singer said, "but there are already thousands upon thousands of imitators who think if you write nonsense you're a Kafka. Or if you use stream of consciousness you're a Joyce.

"In the old times a writer knew he had to tell a story. Now many writers cannot write a story at all. They give symbols or a patchwork. All this *gekvitsh un geshray* ["hue and cry"] about symbolism is doing literature great damage.

"Since modern literature tells little, it goes deeper and deeper into commentary, into sociology and pseudopsychology. If Homer had written the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in terms of the psychology of his time, we wouldn't be able to read them today. It's a wonderful thing that Homer gave us the story and let others decide the meaning.

"My generation was brought up on poetry. Nowadays there appear hundreds of books of poetry which are complete puzzles, complete riddles. When you try to find out what these riddles are you find out they are nothing—riddles only for the sake of originality.

"Very many of these bad writers have become professors of literature, and are supposed to teach youngsters to write. Where do we have the Gogol or the Shalom Aleichem to write the tragicomedy of these professors?

"Often a writer hands me a manuscript, and I'm shocked at how bad it is. I ask him, 'How do you make a living?' He says, 'I'm teaching literature.' This is how the universities spit on literature.

"In the old days, departments of literature were small, and people were not compelled to read books against their will. Today the passion for writing is very great, millions of students are being taught literature, and students get accustomed to the idea that no matter how boring a book is, they have to read it.

"If a book was boring, we used to throw it away. Now it is considered that a book must be boring to be good.

"This country is crawling with angry young men—in sociology, in politics, in biology. But I am looking

for the angry young men in literature.

"I am waiting for a strong spiritual man who would bang a fist on the table and say, 'Enough of this nonsense.' Sometimes I thought I should be this man. Being a Yiddish writer, the chances of my voice being heard are small. But I've decided to make my contribution, no matter how small. I'm sure that thousands of people have the same feelings and just don't dare to speak up. People feel subconsciously that it's a dangerous game, but there's nobody yet with the courage to say, 'Let's put an end to it.'"

THE VOICES AND VISIONS OF ALDOUS HUXLEY

by Louis Kronenberger

In the early 1920s a young Aldous Huxley vaulted into the English literary world and within a few years had gained both a secure and a somewhat special place there. He spoke for a new, and a new kind of, generation around which a cluster of adjectives adhered—emancipated, which could very well mean irreverent; sophisticated, which on occasion could mean shocking. In addition Huxley seemed notably well educated, with not just a savant's vocabulary but a young intellectual's grasp of modern thought; and for all his didoes, he remained fundamentally serious, a pessimist from seeing old verities fall away and a prober after values to replace them. The faintly autobiographical hero of his novels was at best a weary, puzzled skeptic and only the hero because everyone else was a grinning unbeliever, or a believer in trash, or a believer in evil. Not for nothing was Aldous the grandson of T.H. Huxley and the grandnephew of Matthew Arnold. But from the leafy branches of so impressive a family tree Aldous himself sometimes seemed to swing like a very agile and mischievous cat or monkey, respecting it as a tree of knowledge, but respecting equally knowledge's need of living sap. Huxley became fashionable, but from books that contained lees as well as froth; became satiric, but could be censor as well as jester; modern, but mocking the present rather more often than the

past; and as versatile as he was prolific, so that his readers were kept hopping from such novels as *Crome Yellow* and *Antic Hay* to the short stories in *Limbo* and *Mortal Coils*, only to leap once more from the poetry of *Leda* to the essays in *On the Margin*.

But how versatile he was to become in the four decades thereafter, through not only a diversity of literary genres but a miscellany of isms and ologies, one could not have easily foreseen. The full measure of it becomes apparent with the publication of his letters (Harper & Row, \$15.00), which, as the editor, Grover Smith, remarks, constitute "a kind of autobiography." Actually letter-writing occupies a very prominent place among Huxley's activities: Mr. Smith estimates that he must have written at least ten thousand letters in all, twenty-five hundred of which Mr. Smith has examined, and almost a thousand of which he has here very ably edited and put in print. And in them we encounter the unorthodox history and changing chemistry of a remarkable man.

Huxley grew up as part of that intellectual aristocracy sired by great Victorian names and impatient of many Victorian shibboleths—Darwins and Stephenses as well as Huxleys; Trevelyans and Stracheys as well as Arnolds—with, in Julian Huxley, a brilliant five-years-older brother who would become a famous biologist.

Precociously bright, and very perky and playful, Aldous at fourteen, rather than echoing a Shelley or a Keats, wrote biological and rather Edward Learish doggerel to Julian:

Storm fell over the lake,
and the lake was covered with fleas,
the fleas were ghosts of the hake,
and the hake were covered with bees:
the bees were the ghosts of the cows,
and the cows were covered with slugs,
and the slugs were the ghosts of the sows,
and the sows were covered with bugs

"—and so on," adds the author, "ad infirmitatem."

Aldous himself had planned to specialize in biology in advance of studying medicine, but at Eton, when he was sixteen, he was stricken with keratitis punctata, an eye disease which left him virtually blind and, quite undespondently, dependent on braille. Writing years later to an eye-menaced Clive Bell, Aldous could say: "Everything has its compensations, and I remember with pleasure the volupté of reading Braille in bed, in the dark and with one's book and hands snugly under the bed clothes." In due time surgery, powerful spectacles, and a certain indomitable spirit enabled Huxley to function very well; indeed, he carried off one of the two firsts given at Oxford the year he graduated. This was during World War I, when Huxley could vie with James Thurber in memorable accounts of idiotic draft boards—the doctor, Aldous wrote to his father, "made me take all my clothes off, to examine my eyes."

Already in his Oxford days Huxley was entering the world of the arts, meeting D. H. Lawrence and hailing him as a "great man" and a "genius"; lunching at Lady Ottoline Morell's, whom he came to like and frequently visit, but perhaps came closer to being right about at the first meeting: Lady Ottoline was "a quite incredible creature . . . arty beyond the dreams of avarice" and "overwhelmingly" affected. Frequently Huxley's keen sense of human failings salts his letters without staining them; though outspoken and sharp, he is seldom petty or mean; and when he does condemn at first sight, as in calling Edmund Gosse "the bloodiest little old man I have ever seen," he stigmatizes someone whose offensive touchiness and testiness intimidated a whole generation.

The World War I and the post-

war years, despite Huxley's teaching chores at Eton and elsewhere and his lean finances, are filled with high spirits and given to the anecdotes, asides, and small talk that make for lively letter-writing. Those were years ablaze with new names and new talents, about which Huxley offers reasonably new tidbits. "Poor [T.S.] Eliot has been called up and will probably be a private in the Kentucky Yeomanry or the Memphis, Ohio Fusiliers"; this did not happen, so that "Eliot [is] in fine form, and his wife too: I rather like her, she is such a genuine person, vulgar but with no attempt to hide her vulgarity." Again: "The folk who run [Wheels] are a family called Sitwell, alias Shuttlebottom, one sister and two brothers . . . each of them larger and whiter than the other. . . . Their great object is to REBEL . . . the steps they are prepared to take . . . are so small as to be hardly perceptible to the naked eye." Huxley and Lytton Strachey "did not much care for each other," nor did Huxley much care for some of Virginia Woolf's work. Set against the fine-spun, ultracivilized world of Bloomsbury, Huxley seems more humanly and vigorously so; also, unlike the Virginia Woolfs and Edith Sitwells, he had a truly civilized, which is to say quite manageable, vanity; and rather than a cold wit, a savingly coarse sense of fun.

At twenty-five Huxley married a Belgian girl, Maria Nys; their thirty-five-year marriage before she died appears to have been a very happy one, and Huxley also, during these years, made an interesting variety of friends. He would seem to have sped all through the 1920s pen in hand, writing not only a long row of books and reams of letters, but weekly book reviews and play reviews; while, suitcase in the other hand, he moved about Belgium, France, Spain, Italy, Tunisia, and made a round-the-world trip which included a first visit to the United States. He damned the United States in advance of visiting it, endorsing Dickens' far earlier appraisal: "the same interminable, canting balderdash about high moral principles . . . the same verbose, pseudo-philosophic, sham-scientific language," and, new since Dickens, "the spoiling of women by the men." India, where the Huxleys halted for several months, produced some rather long-winded descriptive let-

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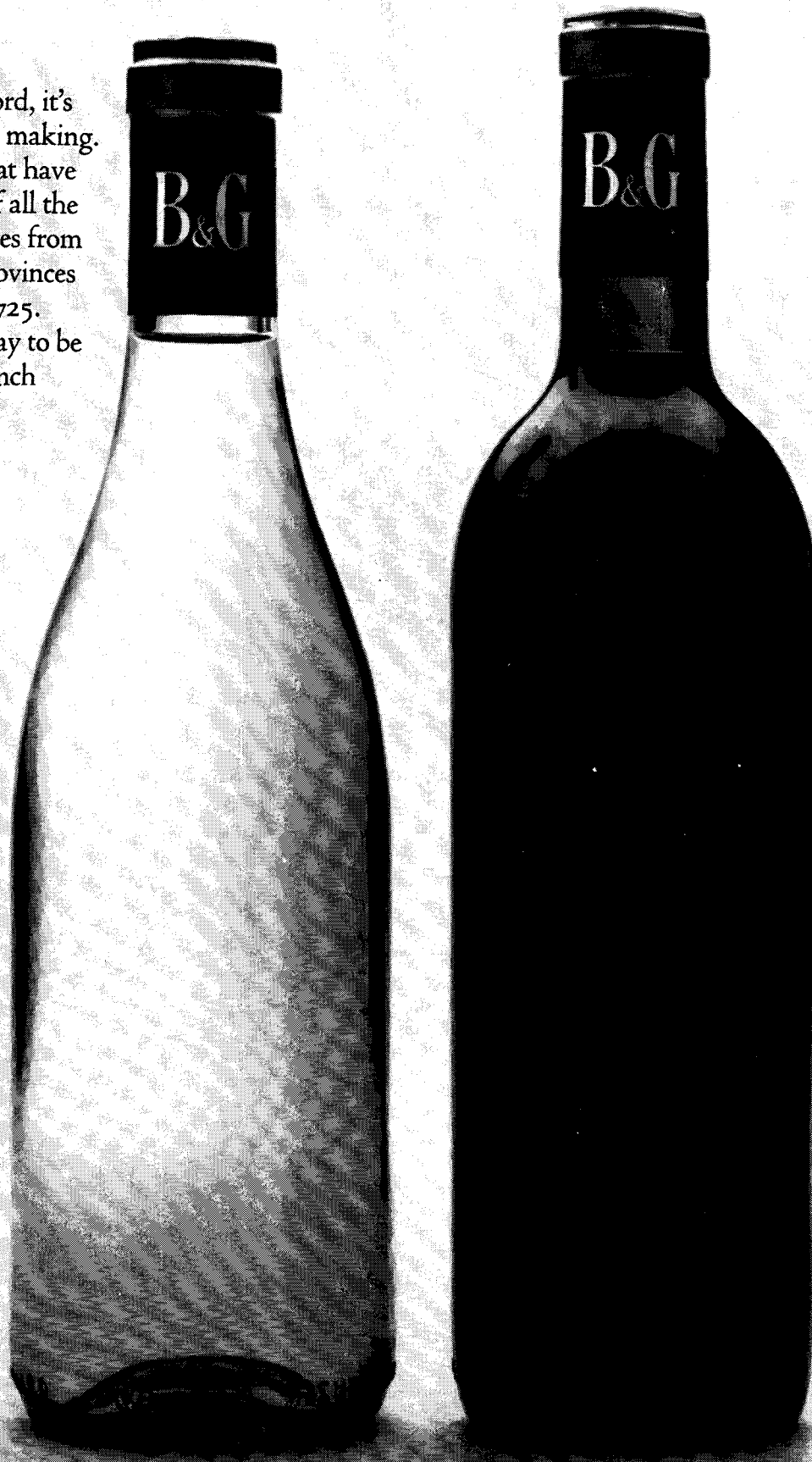
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ters, relieved by such vignettes as this of Gandhi:

We were next to Gandhi, who does the holy ascetic in a loin cloth . . . and who, at the moment, is looked after by a young woman called Miss Slade . . . who sits there worshipping Gandhi like a dog . . . handing him his spectacles, adjusting his loin cloth, giving him his food. . . He just treats her as though she weren't there

or this on sacred cows:

The life of a cow is held more sacred than that of a man. They wander everywhere . . . wander very majestically and slowly, being perfectly aware that they are sacred . . . if you have the bad luck to run over one, the only thing to do is to jam on the accelerator and run for it; several years imprisonment is the least one would get for the offense. The law against cow killing is so strict that one must not introduce Bovril into the country and I heard of a European woman who was turned back at the frontier because she had some corned beef among her provisions.

There is considerable running comment during these years about writers. Anita Loos is "ravishing":

One would like to keep her as a pet. She is the doyenne of Hollywood, having started to write for the movies when she was seven. . . . What she really likes doing, it appears, is plain sewing; spends all her holidays in making underclothes which nobody can wear.

Dante is "the only man, I suppose, who's ever succeeded in making unmitigated goodness seem interesting." Gide Huxley finds disappointing: *The Counterfeiters* is "very good" [but] "because it is the first book in which Gide has ventured to talk about the one thing in the world that really interests him—sentimental sodomy." Huxley here is perhaps himself disappointing. He has several references to D.H. Lawrence in the months before his death—his refusing to see doctors and obstinacy against professional medicine; at his death Huxley calls him "the most extraordinary and impressive human being I have ever known." Though Lawrence had also been "difficult to get on with, passionate, queer, violent," their friendship had survived. Toward Frieda Lawrence, Huxley minces no words: "I like her in a way; but being with her makes me

believe Buddha was right when he numbered stupidity among the deadly sins"; and later, "Her diplomatic methods consist in calling every one a liar, a swine and a lousy swindler, and then in the next letter being charming—and . . . surprised that people don't succumb to her charm."

These dozen or more years that portray an ebullient Huxley as he becomes increasingly mature constitute an extraordinary period, leaving one staggered at times by how much Huxley read, how much he wrote, how much he saw, and how much in life he responded to. The period may be regarded as over when in 1936 Huxley sounded a new note in *Eyeless in Gaza*, allotting his cosmos a measure of idealism and a modicum of hope. In the number of his later activities Huxley was slowed down very little, but there was a significant change in the nature of them, not wholly unaffected by a change of air. After 1937 the erstwhile denigrator of the United States lived for the most part in it—and in the most lampooned part of it, Southern California. There Huxley periodically had Hollywood jobs and periodically wrote high-browish books, while becoming, as is well known, increasingly occupied with mystical, philosophical, scientific, parapsychological, and medical theories, therapies, and experiments.

The new period saw him converted to the Bates system for improving eyesight; he gave up wearing glasses and apparently got around fairly well; he then wrote *The Art of Seeing*, which sold unusually well. His constantly proliferating interests acquired a more and more prominent place in his correspondence, and specially include Vedanta and

Zen Buddhism, clairvoyance, hypnosis, spiritualism, animal magnetism, automatic writing, telepathy, the psychedelic, and visionary experiences from using mescaline and LSD. If in all this there is no mere faddism and not too much wishful thinking, there is an element of the infatuated amateur and there are at times inescapably comic touches. Of Huxley's new exercising board with a rotary top, his son Matthew writes: "Every hour or so Aldous appears and solemnly imitates a whirling Dervish in the middle of the drawing room." Yet behind the desire for mystical experience lay a concern for scientific experiment; behind the trafficking in voices and visions lay a search for a cosmic plan or faith or law. Plainly Huxley sought to push beyond reason, not fall below it: "My primary occupation," he said, "is the achievement of some kind of over-all understanding of the world . . . through the building up of some hypothesis that accounts for the facts." In any case, he kept looking for a synthesis and undergoing various experiences, many of the mystical ones with his wife.

My own ignorance outlaws any appraisal of most of this. But others besides me must feel grounded by Huxley's mystical ascents, must look blank at the references in such passages as "From what I have read about the doctrine of the Void, in Suzuki and La Vallée Poussin, I should say it corresponded very closely with the Taulerian conception," and must fail of comprehension in such passages as "the dualism transcended, not in a One, but in an advaita, a not-two consciousness of the identity of samsara and nirvana." There is a great deal of this, sometimes at great length, and boring in the degree that it is baffling. Hux-

THE STRAYED MESSAGE

BY ROBERT GRAVES

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ley's range in reading also turned up such curiosities as a man who could go to the bathroom only after flagellation, and a Victorian male chastity belt for an adolescent, which, should he start misbehaving in bed at night, rang a bell in his parents' bedroom. Yet as late as 1963 Huxley had never heard of Dr. Spock.

Huxley was never really overwhelmed by his cosmic quest, if only from never finding an answer to his cosmic question. "I remain," he wrote shortly before his death, "an agnostic." Nor did he dissociate himself from the world, or lose his satiric bite, or neglect his mundane chores. His life, in fact, came to present striking contrasts: for one, the mysticism of his high-altitude studies seemed to run on alternating current with the materialism of the Hollywood studios. In terms of career, Huxley's Achilles' heel was his wish to make good on Broadway; but having made plays out of his novels and stories, he encountered on Broadway every other kind of heel, ran into gush followed by glaciers, and saw the liberties Broadway takes to make a play worse. Huxley, each time, became a sadder but no wiser man, and never seems to have realized that, in themselves, adaptations are usually murderers of "art." There are also such ironic, if all-too-human, contrasts as Huxley's refusal to face the fact of his wife's cancer, and in the matter of his own, using the latest radium treatment instead of surgery, which might have saved him. Ironically, too, so famous a man died all but unnoticed: on the same day, President Kennedy was assassinated.

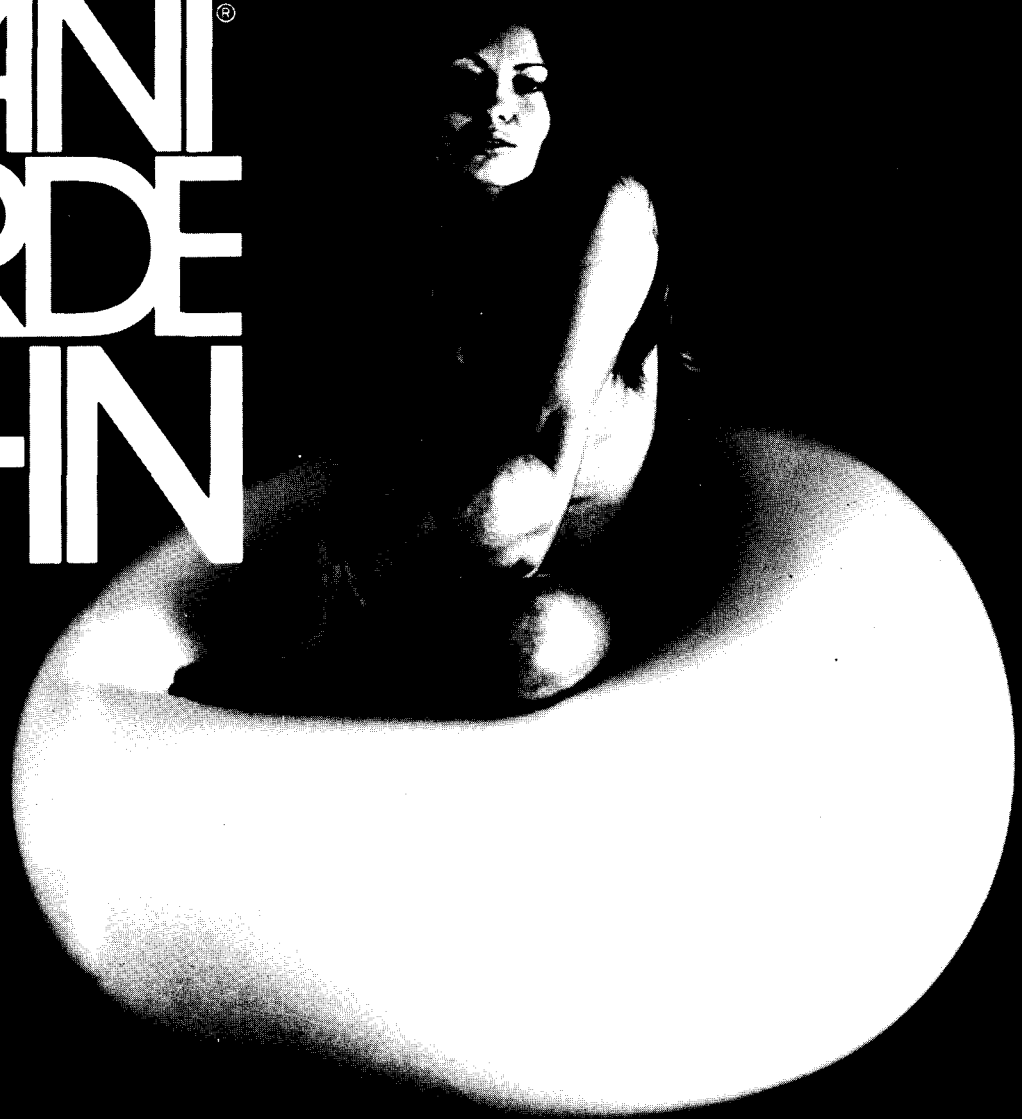
Just what does this autobiography signify in terms of achievement? Huxley's writings are many and varied: the reverse of an impassioned specialist, he embraced a widespread, slightly unwieldy, culture; the reverse of an immured specialist, he displayed a tremendous intellectual curiosity. In a way, these tokens of a very superior man have tended to diminish Huxley's reputation as a writer, from how difficult it has become to center it. His later books grow apart from one another as often as out of one another, and in keeping up with so much else, he rather fell behind in the world of letters.

Perhaps from reading Huxley very early in his career, I find the period that ended in the early 1930s the

most fruitful and attractive. Thus, if we turn back to very distant days, the best-known stories in *Mortal Coils*—"The Gioconda Smile," "The Tillotson Banquet," and "Nuns at Luncheon"—still seem clever and bright and prophesy a brighter future. Thus, *Antic Hay* is still, barring some essaylike longueurs, a good satiric romp with farcical overtones, parading and punishing various tendencies and types of its era. Huxley's endowments bring to mind his interest in Peacock and contain ingredients for a twentieth-century Peacock, including the erudite vocabulary, the belle-lettrist comments, and the characters drawn—and quartered—from life. Huxley recognized his creative limitations; protesting in middle age a blurb that called him a "great novelist," he said, "I am some kind of essayist sufficiently ingenious to get away with writing a very limited kind of fiction." So, rather much, was Peacock; but Peacock, by keeping within limits in his country-house novels, cohered and matured as a manner, where, by becoming a jack-of-all-cultures, Huxley split himself up as a man. He was perhaps one of those people on whom at birth a bad fairy bestows too many and too miscellaneous gifts; or, to abandon mythology for genealogy, the offspring of a Huxley and an Arnold became the child of both Science and Art—and of some very debatable "sciences" and eight or nine facets of literary art. Huxley's famous great-grandfather, Dr. Arnold of Rugby, may well have furthered the bad-fairy role: though the robustly Christian Doctor never supplied Aldous with a religion, he perhaps infected him with a lifelong search for one.

Doubtless Huxley's wide-rangingness has given him not one solid public, but several rather dissimilar ones with, as probably his best known and decidedly his most "relevant" book today, *Brave New World*. Somewhat like Shaw, Huxley covered a vast terrain; but where Shaw, however he may have faded otherwise, remains impregnably a playwright, it is hard to say how much Huxley has survived as a novelist. How much, for example, does Huxley figure in academic reckonings, or is he taught in college courses—and by which departments? The letters are in their autobiographical way perhaps the shortest way of grasping the multi-

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plicity of Huxley's interests, the play of his mind, the components of his character and temperament. As a man, he seems to me to come off very well indeed. For those who share his later interests, his later letters should constitute a fascinating document. If, for others, those letters may seldom seem remunerative, the remain-

ing ones are, in large part, superior and reveal the cultivated writer, the responsively alive human being, the tartly satiric social observer, the traveler, family man, and friend. These letters should help lead the way to a re-examining of much that seems too little revaluated, and too little visited, in Huxley's work.

MOVIES

THE FLICKS IN FRANCE

by James K. Glassman

A new political film by Costa-Gavras, the director of *Z*, opened in Paris on April 29. It is a disturbing film and appears likely to have at least as much impact in Europe and the United States as its predecessor. In its first week it was seen by 81,140 Frenchmen. By comparison, *Z*, which was by far the biggest movie in France last year, was seen by 22,660 in its first week.

The new one is called *L'Aveu* ("The Confession"). It is based on

the autobiography of Artur London, published here in 1969. London is a loyal Communist—a veteran of the Spanish Civil War, the French Resistance, and a Nazi concentration camp—who is, at the time the movie opens, vice minister of foreign affairs in Czechoslovakia during the first years of Communist rule there. Suddenly, one Sunday in January, 1951, he is arrested by the government and charged with treason. He is tortured physically and mentally for twenty-

two months in Prague prisons. Finally, he must memorize a long confession, in which he admits ludicrous crimes (he is forced to say that he was a "Titoist" in Spain in 1938, long before Marshal Tito came to power). London is convicted in a mass show trial along with thirteen other former government officials. Eleven of them are executed. London and two others get life sentences. He is released in 1956, seemingly as part of Khrushchev's destalinization program.

London moves to France, and in discussions over luncheon on a terrace in Monte Carlo (passages which Costa-Gavras cuts into the scenes of torture), he tells friends that his faith in the Communist cause has not wavered. He writes his autobiography, and just as he finishes, he decides to go to Prague again for a visit. It is August: Russian tanks are rolling through the streets, young men are dying (Costa-Gavras uses bloody still photographs of the Russian invasion), and a slogan in white paint on a brick wall reads: "LENIN, WAKE UP! THEY HAVE GONE MAD!"

L'Aveu is not as simple as *Z*. It does not present us with an easy good-guys-against-fascists theme. It does not give us thrills of righteous indignation. It is not especially exciting. Instead, it forces us to concentrate on two deep problems—loyalty and power. When the film opens in the United States, these problems will likely be misinterpreted. The picture will appear simply as an anti-Communist diatribe. "Look at the Commies," people will say. "They kill and torture like maniacs, even their own people." This is the idea that most Americans drew from Arthur Koestler's *Darkness at Noon*, and from Alexander Solzhenitsyn's *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.

This is not what Costa-Gavras is saying at all. He is a good leftist, and the film reflects the agony of any good leftist intellectual in France, where the Communist Party as a political force ranks second only to the Gaullists and yet takes rigidly pro-Moscow and antihumanitarian positions. The Party supported the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968 and opposed the student rebellion in France a few months before (and, in doing so, may have prevented the overthrow of the Fifth Republic).



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Many intellectuals here left the Party after the Stalinist purges in Russia in the 1930s and in Eastern Europe in the early 1950s. The armed suppression of the Hungarian revolt in 1956 was the final injustice for the ones who were left, including Jean-Paul Sartre.

For the French, the film is an agonizing experience. The Party has accomplished a great deal in France, especially during the Resistance. But can a man sacrifice his sanity, his honesty, his life for it? And, if he refuses the sacrifice, is he a bourgeois individualist? The problem of loyalty is, of course, not confined to the Communist Party. Still, with the Party the contradictions are more vivid, and that is why the film is having such an impact in France.

Jorge Semprun, who wrote the screenplay, told a French magazine that the film was "a contribution to the 100th anniversary of Lenin." The French Communist Party, however, does not see things that way. A review in the Party's daily newspaper, *L'Humanité*, claimed that the film was not faithful to London's book and was an "anti-Communist spectacle." The review said that Costa-Gavras had left out Khrushchev's speech at the 20th Party Congress on purpose, and had extracted the film from its political context. It also attacked him for "romanticizing the revolutionary struggle."

The criticism has some validity. Costa-Gavras has made a movie that does isolate London's personal tragedy from its political context. We are watching the man all the time. We see very little of what led to his arrest, of how he came to power, of the death of Stalin and the rise of Khrushchev. This stark isolation is clearly intentional and helps bring out the second theme—power. Costa-Gavras is saying simply that all political power corrupts and leads to monstrous abuses: on the right in *Z* and on the left in *L'Aveu*. The context of the political power makes no difference. In the beginning, it may use reason as a tool to win people over, but soon, the tool becomes torture. And for those who believed in reason from the start, the whole world is destroyed. For those who did not believe in reason at the start, the abuses seem easier to take. Radicals in America can nod their heads at the invasion of Cambodia, at the new repression at home. Liberals,

who believed in the rationality of the regime, have to go through the agony that London did.

The abuse of power may be an obvious theme, but for a leftist it is a daring one to explore. Costa-Gavras is challenging the assumption that revolution will solve anything. In a recent interview, he was asked, "After making *Z* and *L'Aveu*, what is your opinion of politics?" He replied, "I have, in general, a very bad opinion of politics. . . . I have equally a bad opinion of politicians throughout the world." Somehow, *Z* left us with hope. *L'Aveu* leaves us with nothing.

Yves Montand plays London in the film. He has a much larger role than he did in the two earlier Costa-Gavras successes—*The Sleeping-Car Murder* and *Z* (where he is killed off early). Montand's own politics are close to those of his director. He was a former factory worker and got his start singing workingmen's songs in Paris nightclubs and music halls just after World War II. Simone Signoret, who was killed off around the middle of the *Sleeping-Car Murder*, plays London's suffering wife, who is as faithful to the Party as London. Both of them are very good.

A film renaissance is going on in France. According to the trade journal *Le Film Français*, movie theaters in Paris during the first three months of 1970 had their highest attendance gains in seven years. Attendance had fallen from 355 million in 1960 to 182 million in 1969. The main reasons for the new rise are that France's better directors are now making films for the masses, and the masses are beginning to appreciate better films. French television is dismal in quality and no longer a novelty. Also, the French are learning to publicize their films more cleverly and more often.

The best current films in Paris, all of them likely to come to the United States, are Claude Sautet's *Les Choses de la Vie*, François Truffaut's *L'Enfant Sauvage*, and Claude Chabrol's *Le Boucher*. They are all in the top twenty in attendance. The overwhelming success, however, is *Borsalino*, a gangster film set in Marseille in the 1930s. It is a third-rate copy of the worst episodes of *The Untouchables*, but it stars Alain Delon (who also produced it) and Jean-Paul Belmondo; the French apparently enjoy watching their own guys shoot people up with machine guns.

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American movies continue their popularity in France, although often the biggest hits in France are those that failed to draw crowds in the States—George Seaton's *Airport* is the best example. Antonioni's *Zabriskie Point* was admired by nearly every critic here—in contrast with its reception in the United States. *Patton* opened recently at four theaters, billed as being about "the man who liberated thousands of French towns and villages." A revival of Buster Keaton's *Steamboat Bill Junior* (1928) is a great success, and twenty-eight Westerns were playing in Paris theaters in one week. With the pass-

ing of the Olympia Music Hall and the mediocrity of the French theater, it is clear that movies will remain the number-one popular art form. The only sad news is the absence of Jean-Luc Godard (*Breathless*) and Alain Resnais (*Hiroshima, Mon Amour*), who, with Truffaut and Chabrol, founded the "nouvelle vague" school of French film-making in 1959. Godard says he will not make any more films because of the compromises involved (a problem of money and politics). Resnais, reports the weekly *L'Express*, is temporarily out of touch, working on something new and difficult.

In the balmy days before her parents had gone to pot Eva had been briefly, unofficially engaged to Jack Pryden, her boyhood companion and Miss Addie's nephew. When he ditched her for a Long Island socialite, Eva's bitterness was more than she could stand, and she found consolation wherever it was offered. She has been seven years married to Lucas, the blond, handsome, slightly tetchy handyman, before the tide of fortune begins to reverse itself; and the man most responsible for the reversal is a stranger, a millionaire contractor named Jarvis who has covered acres of Long Island with his spawning of cheap houses and presently has hope of foisting a similar development on Jordan. To give style to the enterprise he has employed the native sculptor Baldur Blake, a former admirer of Miss Pryden, who in a twinkling turns away from alcoholism and turns on his imagination. Baldur has had a soft spot for Eva ever since she used to pose for him as a nymph, and when he moves in with Lucas and herself, the three are drawn into the web of the odious Mr. Jarvis.

Baldur's Gate is propped on a series of suppositions, some of which, like the sculptor's instant abstinence, make me doubtful. The scandal of Addie Pryden, which the gossips feast on after her death, the pact between herself and the sculptor, and Baldur's attitude toward Jack—all have a Peyton Place implausibility. The mystery of Lucas' background and the piling of coincidence upon coincidence as the deal with Jarvis becomes more ominous seem to me unnaturally shaky props. What redeems the narrative is Miss Clark's feeling for the New England seasons and her characterization of Eva, the honesty of Eva's admissions, her confusion between her sex with Jack and love for Lucas, and her capacity to fight back when desperate.

On her way to becoming a better novelist Miss Clark will learn to economize her introspective passages, which in this story are too often a weariness to the flesh.

THE LIFE OF EZRA POUND
by Noel Stock
Pantheon, \$10.00

The evolution of Ezra Pound from his boyhood in Hailey, Idaho, to a position of power in London and

THE PERIPATETIC REVIEWER

by Edward Weeks

BALDUR'S GATE
by Eleanor Clark
Pantheon, \$7.95

We have all seen them, set discreetly back from the village green or on a knoll commanding the Connecticut or some upland stream, those white, spacious, neoclassic survivors of an earlier age, and as we drive by we think to ourselves that the Judge must have lived there with a daughter or two to keep him company and the grandchildren coming back at Christmas, and what a serene, fastidious life they must have enjoyed in contrast to the anger and anxiety of today. This is what Eleanor Clark is writing about in her discursive, contemporary novel *Baldur's Gate*, for to her these gracious mansions were too often whited sepulchers in which moral debasement had set in long before the developer, with his ranch-house tenements, began to debase the neighborhood. Miss Clark received the National Book Award for *The Oysters of Locmariaquer*, and her new novel is the July selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

In the small Connecticut village of Jordan, so the story goes, there were two historical houses which, with the beauty of the Green and the well-poised Episcopal church, gave the town only a little less renown than Litchfield. The better of the two was the Buckingham's, with its four great elms planted over a century ago, the

wysteria vine which Grandmother Buckingham, along with her money, had brought as a cutting from California, and the grandis fir which shaded the living room and which was standing when George Washington, on the march, might have entered the dwelling. The second-best, smaller, not so well designed in mantel and doorway, was the Prydens', and it was Miss Pryden—Addie to those who knew her well—who maintained its distinction. Even in her middle years she was a dazzler. What with her Ph.D. in Latin, her essays on French literature and local history, her acumen in politics, and her magnetism, she had made her home a stopover for distinguished visitors.

Early in the century there had been intimacy and equality between the two families, but by 1952 when the novel opens, the Buckingham's have lost their money and their character; Eva Buckingham, the last of the grandchildren and the heroine of the book, has watched her mother's futile efforts to keep the big house afloat, first as a boarding school and then, when that failed, as a rented teahouse; now a dilapidated shell, it is Eva's to care for. Through the years of defeat Miss Pryden, in her clever, saturnine way, had not offered much help to her prettier, younger neighbor, and the feuding between the two, the mixture of admiration and resentment which Eva feels, sets the story in motion.

Rapallo as the catalyst for poetry in our time, and thence to the naïve and treasonable broadcasts which cost him years of incarceration, is certainly a remarkable story and one which Noel Stock has told as fairly as a partisan can.

Pound was bright and studious, and when at fifteen he elected to be a poet, he had already assimilated the work of James Whitcomb Riley and Rudyard Kipling, from whom he derived his lifelong fondness for dialect, and had read enough of Bliss Carman, Ernest Dowson, Fiona McLeod, and Browning to know that he wanted something different. His father, who backed him as far as a modest budget would allow, sent him to the University of Pennsylvania, where Ezra did well in the classics and where he had the good fortune to make friends with a freshman in the Department of Dentistry, William Carlos Williams, a fellow poet who was to remain his closest American confidant. Williams drew this sketch of Pound in 1904:

He is really a brilliant talker and thinker but delights in making himself just exactly what he is not: a laughing boor. His friends must be all patience in order to find him out and even then you must not let him know it, for he will immediately put on some artificial mood and be really unbearable. It is too bad, for he loves to be liked, but there is some quality in him which makes him too proud to try to please people.

Perhaps because he preferred the intimacy of a small college, Ezra transferred to Hamilton. He was good at languages, and the work in French, Italian, and Spanish which he did under Professor William Pierce Shepard led to private tutoring in Provençal and the beginning of his infatuation with the Troubadours. Poetry was always his obsession, and in "How I Began," written when he was twenty-seven, he looked back at his younger self:

He resolved that at thirty he would know more about poetry than any man living: would know the "dynamic content" from the "shell," what was accounted poetry everywhere, what part of it was indestructible and could not be lost in translation, and what effects were obtainable in one language only and were incapable of being translated at all. "In this search I learned more or less of nine foreign languages, I

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read Oriental stuff in translations, I fought every university regulation and every professor who tried to make me learn anything except this, or who bothered me with 'requirements for degrees.'"

As Mr. Stock says, this is a clearer, harder conceit than the boy felt as an undergraduate, but it is certainly indicative.

Money was a problem; he could live on less of it abroad, and the chapters describing how he scrounged his way from Crawfordville, Indiana, where he had been teaching, to Venice, where he paid to have one hundred copies of his first small book of poems, *A Lume Spento*, published by Antonini, is a chronicle of frugality. He arrived in London with \$15 in his pocket, a few copies of his book, and the desire to lecture about the Troubadours; he was bumptious and self-seeking, but he had his scholarship, he had his dedication, and in his verses he was beginning to show, as the biographer puts it, "a rare feeling for the grain of the language."

How well Pound anticipated the future will be seen in these words he wrote for Harold Munro:

[As to] the poetry I expect to see written during the next decade or so, it will, I think, move against poppycock, it will be harder and saner, it will be what Mr. Hewlett calls "nearer the bone." It will be as much like granite as it can be, its force will lie in its truth. . . . We will have fewer painted adjectives impeding the shock and stroke of it. At least for myself, I want it so, austere, direct, free from emotional slither.

It is in his friendships, those he sampled and lost and those he held dear, that we see Pound's influence most forcibly at work. He captivated his first English publisher, Elkin Mathews; to the editors A. R. Orage and Ford Madox Hueffer he brought his hybridizing enthusiasm, although he could never get on Henry Mencken's wavelength; he revered Henry James and Laurence Binyon, though there was no intimacy with either; he championed the early work of Robert Frost ("We quarrelled within six weeks," wrote Frost later), as he did that of D. H. Lawrence, whose friendship lasted longer. He scouted for Harriet Munroe, the editor of *Poetry*, and cheered on the lesser lights who never made it. The creative stimulus which he gave to that great trio, Yeats, Eliot, and

Joyce, was a gift for which each was grateful.

The eccentricity which began to develop after he settled in Italy in 1923 makes it necessary to distinguish between Pound the poet and Pound the man. The fractiousness which was a part of his nature became sharper. After his acceptance of Major Douglas' theory of Social Credit, Pound renounced England, which he said was going to the dogs. As a political thinker he was a child: his admiration for Fascism, his ideas on race, his anti-Semitism ("Roosevelt is more in the hands of the Jew than Wilson was in 1919") grew more strident as the Depression deepened his misgivings about this country.

He did not set foot in America until 1939, and after an absence of twenty-eight years, he was out of touch and uninformed: the abuse which he turned loose in the broadcasts from Italy when we were at war and for which he was paid \$17 a performance was the ranting of an unbalanced egoist and led to his confinement at war's end in St. Elizabeth's Hospital after it was rightly determined that he should not stand trial. The poets remained loyal to him, particularly E. E. Cummings and T. S. Eliot, but it was primarily the persistence of Archibald MacLeish that procured Pound's release after eleven years. It was a tawdry ending for a dedicated man who will be remembered not so much for what he wrote as for what he gave to other poets.

HAPPINESS

by Mary Lavin
Houghton Mifflin, \$4.95

Mary Lavin is Irish in thought and feeling, and the short story is her most natural form of expression. "It is in the short story," she once wrote, "that a writer distills the essence of his thought. I believe this because the short story, shape as well as matter, is determined by the writer's own character. Both are one. Short-story writing—for me—is only looking closer than normal into the human heart." Stories do not pour out of her as they did out of John O'Hara, because in her life on Abbey Farm on the bank of the River Boyne her writing is done in snatches of time filched from other duties; but those which do emerge have an in-

take of life, the fret and thrust of the human spirit, and a marvelous sense of compression so that we have, in the space of twenty pages or less, the essential character and the emotional development of her leading figure. Her early stories, *Tales From Bective Bridge*, many of which appeared in the *Atlantic*, were either lyrical—I think of the Irish fiddler in

THE WRITERS

Israel Shenker is a reporter for the *New York Times*, who, over a recent luncheon, was served up some plain truths about the state of literature by Isaac B. Singer, a 1970 National Book Award winner.

Louis Kronenberger is a literary man for all seasons. He reveals some of his versatility in his new autobiographical book, *No Whippings, No Gold Watches*, published last month by Atlantic-Little, Brown.

James K. Glassman was managing editor of the *Harvard Crimson* last year and has spent this year traveling and writing in France.

Edward Weeks, former editor in chief of the *Atlantic*, continues to edit books for the Atlantic Monthly Press.

Phoebe Adams is a faithful contributor of short reviews to this column.

Stanley Kunitz (page 54) is a translator, poet, editor, and educator who was awarded the Pulitzer Prize in 1959 for his *Selected Poems*.

Rosellen Brown (page 61) lives in Brooklyn.

James Tate (page 73) is, at the age of twenty-six, an experienced lecturer and teacher, and the author of two books of poetry. *The Oblivion Ha-Ha*, was recently published by Atlantic-Little, Brown.

Pamela Alexander (page 82) is a young native of Massachusetts. She just graduated from Bates College in Maine.

Robert Graves (page 103) will have a new book of his poetry published by Doubleday this month.

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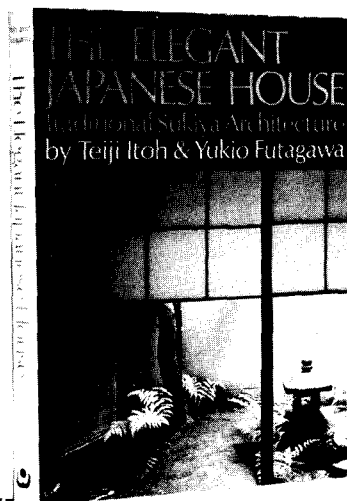
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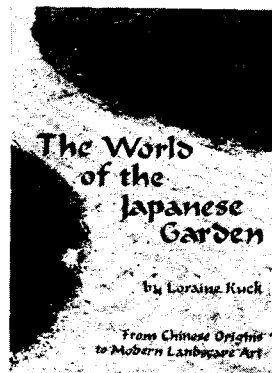
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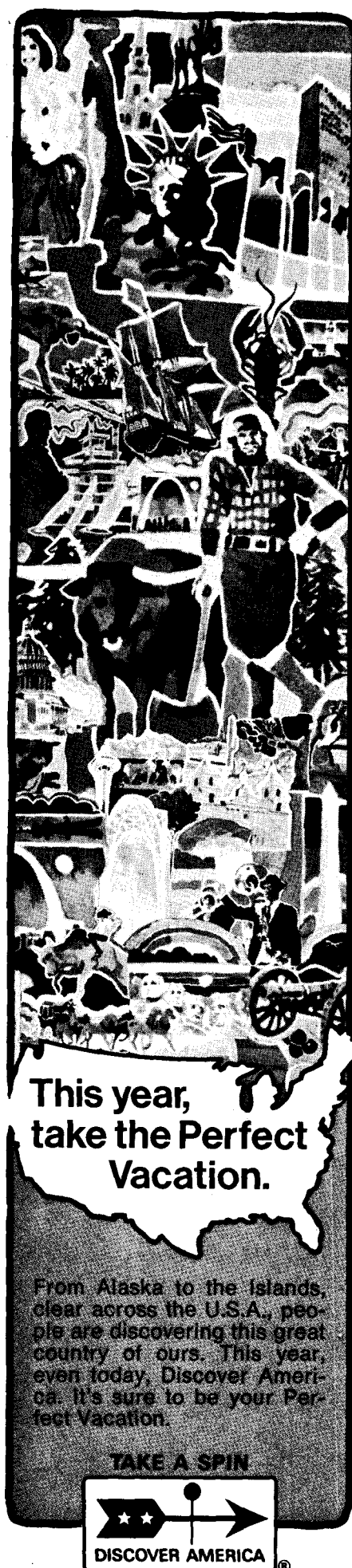
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"At Sallygap"—or they celebrated the rebellion and escape from the cage of convention. Then with the loss of the two men she loved best, her father and her young husband, William Walsh, death for a time weighed the balance.

In her new collection, *Happiness and Other Stories*, she is at her mature best: in the title story, where a young widow defies the restraint of her children and of Father Hugh, the priest she loves, in her determined search for Happiness, she achieves better than ever the miracle of compressing so much of life in so little space. In the longest story, "A Pure Accident," she treats the Church as she treats her people, with irony, the flick of humor, and with a sudden disclosure of the spirit of distress which brings tears to the eyes.

the same, why write the book? One way around the problem is fantasy, in which the author can retain the expected emotional relationships of his characters while committing them to totally unexpected actions. Miss Rasp has used this old fairy tale device brilliantly in her novel about an adolescent boy, his mother, and his stepfather. The stepfather is determined to train Kuno for what he considers a proper and distinguished career. The mother wavers between sympathy for her badgered son and witless love for her husband. The youth is submissive and baffled. All the treacheries, jealousies, bullyings, and semi-incestuous affections proper to the situation become more vivid because the career in question is unsuitably arboreal; Kuno is to become a tree. A clever, haunting, savagely funny projection of commonplace domestic folly.

SHORT REVIEWS: BOOKS

by Phoebe Adams

THE SPACE WITHIN THE HEART by Aubrey Menen. McGraw-Hill, \$5.95. Always original in his approach to a subject, Mr. Menen has outdone himself by writing the story of his life in the guise of an attempt to rid himself, via principles derived from the Upanishads, of the irrelevancies of that life. The result is an odd, witty autobiography which tells, in the end, precisely what most autobiographies tell—that is, no more than the author chooses to reveal. But how amusingly Mr. Menen works this shell game!

ONE DOWN by Anders Bodelsen. Harper & Row, \$5.95. Mr. Bodelsen starts his motorcar thriller in a Danish snowstorm and by various wily devices keeps wheels and chills at high speed to the last page. Good cold reading for a hot afternoon.

A FAMILY FAILURE by Renate Rasp. Translated from the German by Eva Figs. Orion, \$5.95. The patterns of family behavior laid down as typical by psychiatry make life easy for a novelist in one way (no need to puzzle about a woman's attitude toward her beautiful daughter—she hates the girl) and difficult in another, for if all mothers must feel

AN EYE FOR AN EYE by H. Jack Griswold, Mike Misenheimer, Art Powers, and Ed Tromanhauser. Holt, Rinehart & Winston, \$6.95. The authors are convicts, have been for years and will be for years to come. Their special field of disgusted expertise is the Indiana State Prison, in which they happen to be locked up, but there is small reason to think that other prisons are less beastly, or more useful, than this wretched place, where large amounts of public money are spent on converting casual thugs into habitual criminals. Understandably, the authors are strong on the injustice and inefficiency of the prison system, weak on suggesting alternative measures.

OLD WIVES' TALES by Iris Andreski. Schocken, \$5.95. While her sociologist husband was studying conditions in Eastern Nigeria, Mrs. Andreski collected autobiographies from local women. The tales are, individually, short, blunt, and unemotional, but taken together, they provide, along with Mrs. Andreski's introduction, a most interesting picture of tribal and evolving urban life in Ibibioland. They offer no base for sentimentality about noble savages or corrupting European influence—notions with which Mrs. Andreski has a total and acid lack of sympathy.

RICHARD LINDNER by Dore Ashton. Abrams, \$25.00. The fine reproductions of Lindner's harsh, neon-bright

paintings were done in Japan and would make the book a delight regardless of the text. Miss Ashton's text is, happily, well written, brisk, devoid of jargon, with a neat balance of the biographical and the critical.

THE NEOPHILIACS by Christopher Booker. Gambit, \$8.95. Mr. Booker has observed British society, swinging London and all that, for the past ten years and has decided that his country was mad. He thinks the rest of the world was, and is, equally mad. The idea would be more alarming if the world had ever been notably sane.

THE 100 MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN THE WORLD TODAY by Donald Robinson. Putnam, \$6.95. That's what the man said, and he means every word of it. Simple journalistic biographies, estimates strictly of the moment. If Mr. Robinson had concocted this book in 1925, he would have left out Adolf Hitler.

LOST NAMES by Richard E. Kim. Praeger, \$5.95. The Korean novelist's latest book is not exactly a novel, unless one is prepared to accept the Japanese occupation of Korea as an adequate unifying theme. Perhaps it is: certainly, for the Koreans, the Japanese presence was a major, inescapable condition of existence. Call the book a novel in seven sections, then, each devoted to a particular facet of one family's struggle against the invader, with tactics ranging from silent dignity to armed riot. Presumably the story is largely autobiographical and straight out of Mr. Kim's Japanese-tormented youth, for it comes in clear-cut black and white terms; all Japanese are evil and all Koreans are good. If the Koreans sometimes seem too virtuous for belief, it must be remembered that this is a Christian group, seriously practicing what nineteenth-century missionaries preached, and quite untroubled by twentieth-century occidental free-thinking.

THE WORLD OF HIRSCHFELD by Al Hirschfeld. Abrams, \$25.00. Mr. Hirschfeld's drawings cover thirty years of show business and provide a luscious wallow in nostalgia. There is also some text by the artist, a cagey fellow. He defines a cartoon as a bum caricature and a caricature as a fine cartoon.

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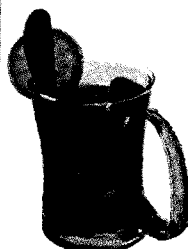
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